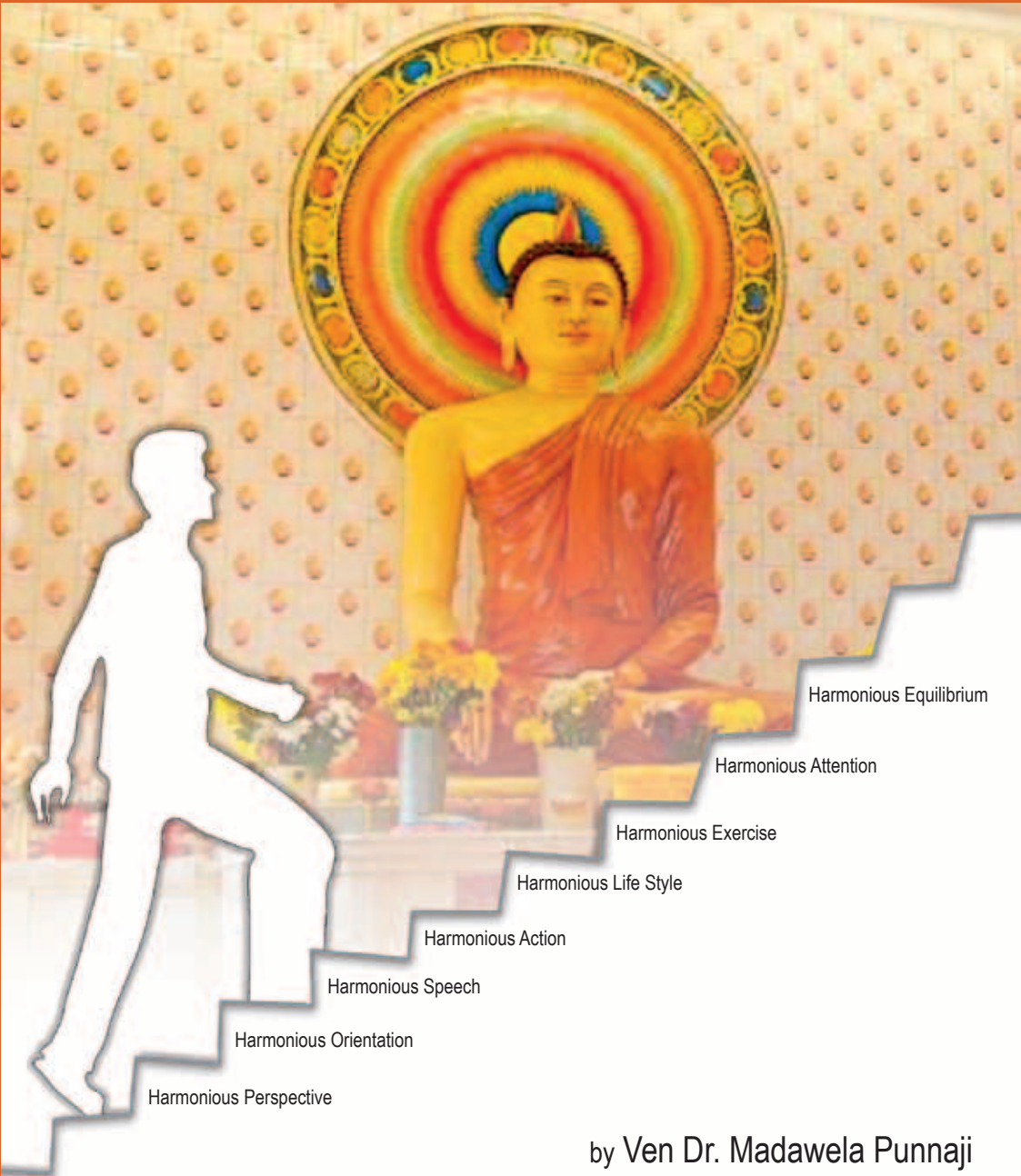


ARIYAMAGGA BHAVANA

(The Sublime Eightfold Way)

Level I - *Selective Thinking Meditation Guide*



Harmonious Equilibrium

Harmonious Attention

Harmonious Exercise

Harmonious Life Style

Harmonious Action

Harmonious Speech

Harmonious Orientation

Harmonious Perspective

by Ven Dr. Madawela Punnaji

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Stage I Meditation

Foreword

Buddhist meditation, as taught in this retreat, is not a mystical practice. This technique of meditation is for people who are living a secular life as householders, who go to work, have responsibilities, and who are involved in various social relationships. What such people need is freedom from stress, and freedom from worries and anxieties of life. They need peace of mind, healthy relationships, self-confidence, success in life, and efficiency at work. This means learning to gain control over the emotional disturbances that prevent them from thinking clearly or acting rationally. These problematic emotional disturbances come in the form of anger, lust, worries, fears, and anxieties. The form of Buddhist meditation taught here helps one free the mind of emotional disturbances and to think clearly and act rationally.

It involves a systematic technique of consciously purifying the mind. All impurities arise from self-centred emotional states. The pure mind is the tranquil mind. When the mind is purified, one experiences an inner happiness, a physical comfort, and a kindness and compassion that one has never experienced before. The happiness referred to here is not a state of emotional excitement, but a tranquil undisturbed state of the mind. The kindness and compassion taught here is not based on attachment. It is a state of unselfishness. Emotional excitement is not true happiness, and attachment is not true love. Happiness and kindness are attributes of the pure and tranquil mind.

Therefore, the aim of this method of meditation is to purify the mind and relax the body resulting in happiness, kindness and a mature intelligence. However, the mind can only be purified by first restraining the behavior in the form of *sila*.

INTRODUCTION

We are all used to taking a physical bath to clean and cool the body. After the bath we feel fresh and comfortable. It is very rarely, however, or even never do we get the opportunity to clean our minds in the same way. We tend to carry into adult life the dirt we have been accumulating since our infancy, and probably we even carry accruelements from our former lives.

Therefore, the reason for our meditation is clear: it is to **purify the mind**. By purifying the mind, we become **good, happy and wise**. The individual creates society, and society creates the world. Therefore, we begin with the individual, and that is YOU. The impurities to be eradicated are the self-centered emotions, which the Buddha called lust (*lobha*), hate (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*). “Delusion” is the “notion of ‘self,’” that accompanies lust and hate and becomes the foundation of all “selfishness.”

These emotions not only pollute our minds, but they also interfere with our physical health. This problem is what is today called **STRESS**. Emotions have been useful for some lower animals for the preservation of life and the propagation of the species. But the human beings have a better tool for that purpose, which is **intelligence**. Intelligence is the one distinctive feature that sets the human being apart from all other animals. As the ancient Indian *sloka* says:

Feeding, sleeping, fear and sex
Common are these to man and beast
Espesial to man is thought complex
Thought when low, man is a beast

Sometimes people raise doubts, when we speak of purifying the mind. This doubt is partly due to certain concepts prevalent in the Western part of the world. Some Western religious beliefs and some concepts in Western psychology and biology appear to contradict this idea of purification of mind, even though the modern concern about stress management seems to support this Buddhist idea of purification of mind.

Some Western religions have maintained that human beings can never be pure, for only God is pure, and so it would be blasphemous to speak of humans purifying the mind. There is also a common saying in the West, “To err is human, to forgive divine.” This seems to imply that human beings can become pure only through the forgiveness of sins by God, and not through a transformation of the character of the individual. In addition, there has been a historical reason for this Western attitude of mind. A religious community called Puritans, who also spoke of purifying the mind through ascetic self-mortification, had created negative feelings towards purification in Western society.

The Buddhist concept of purity, however, is different from this ascetic Puritanism, because purity in Buddhism runs a medial path between indulgence and asceticism. It is a way to happiness through relaxation of body, and calmness of mind similar to the modern idea of stress management. Happiness is not seen in Buddhism as an emotional excitement but as a state of absolute tranquility, peacefulness, and kindness of heart.

Modern Western psychologists, such as Sigmund Freud, have thought that emotions are natural and instinctual, and that emotional arousal is built into our system, and therefore emotion cannot be eliminated. Even modern biological thinking seems to support this concept. Biologists think that emotion

is necessary for the preservation of life in animals, including humans.

Although Freud thought that these emotions are built into our system as instincts, he was also aware, of the dangers of emotions. He knew that emotions are responsible for all the crimes, wars, and terrorism in the world today. In addition, he was also aware that emotions are the basic factor in all neurosis and psychosis. Therefore, he was aware of the need to eliminate emotions, or at least to learn to control them.

Freud was also aware that emotions were the result of a reaction of the body to stimulation by the environment. It was the modern cognitive psychologists who pointed out that the cognitive interpretation of circumstances lead to the arousal of emotions. Therefore it was possible for the human being to stop the emotional arousal by changing the cognitive interpretation. Buddha, more than 25 centuries earlier, pointed out that this reaction of the body is a chain reaction that flows in to the body from outside. Therefore, emotion can also be viewed to be an influx or influence (*āsava*) that flows in from the environment, on to the organism. This means it is not an instinct nor is it something that is naturally grown in the body like hunger or thirst. Most modern psychologists recognize this fact, and therefore they do not take these emotions to be instincts.

In fact, Eric Fromm, a modern psychoanalyst, has pointed out that Freud always said, “where the *id* is there shall be the *ego*,” which means that Freud had the intention of eliminating the self-centred emotions, as he was aware of the harmfulness of emotions. Therefore instead of the emotions dominating the personality, he thought reason should begin to dominate. This was why he called reason the *ego* (meaning the controlling faculty) and emotion the *id* (meaning impersonal neuter gender

needing to be controlled). This was also what Daniel Goleman, the psychologist, seemed to point out in his recent book entitled *Emotional Intelligence*, though he did not hope to eliminate the emotions altogether, for he believed in the need for emotions. He only wanted to control the emotions using intelligence. Emotions and intelligence are two different activities of the body. Emotions cannot think. Only intelligence can. Therefore, intelligence should control the emotions, and not vice versa.

The use of the term **emotional intelligence** has, however, been subject to criticism because of its possible disastrous implications. It could be misunderstood to mean: “emotions are intelligent and can think, and therefore suitable to be followed.” Such an idea could be very dangerous if blindly followed without proper understanding of its meaning.

It was the Buddha, more than twenty-five centuries earlier in the East, who even questioned: “why attempt to preserve life or propagate the species, because one suffers in the process of attempting to survive, and never succeeds in survival as individuals, because every individual has to die, while even whole species become extinct sometimes. This means, to perpetuate the species is to perpetuate suffering.

It was the Buddha who showed the way to attain a perfectly pure mind, by eliminating the self-centered emotions altogether. Many of his disciples achieved this mental purity, through the natural human technique taught by the Buddha. This wonderful occurrence was based on the principle mentioned in this oft-quoted passage from the Buddha:

“The mind is essentially pure. It is polluted only when foreign matter enters it. This fact is not comprehended by those unfamiliar with the Dhamma. Therefore, no purification of mind for the uneducated, I declare” (*Ang.I.6.1*).

Pabassaramidaṇ bhikkave cittaṇ. Tan ca ko āgantukehi upakkilesehi upakkilitthaṇ. Tan assutavā putujjano yatābhutaṇ nappajanāti. Tasma assutavato putujjanassa cittabhāvana nattiti vadāmiti. (Anguttara Nikaya 1.6.1.).

This means, the mind can obviously be compared to water. For water is a pure substance, which gets polluted only due to foreign matter falling into it. It is due to the water being a pure substance that it can be purified, when polluted, by filtration or distillation, even though water is never found in a pure form naturally. In the same way, the mind can also be purified, because it is essentially pure, provided we know the proper technique. However, the mind too can never be found in its pure form normally.

It is this **saving technique of the Buddha** through a natural technique of purification that you will learn during this retreat. This technique was the original form of Buddhist meditation taught by the Buddha, which is found in the *Sutta Pitaka*. The method of meditation used in this beginner's retreat is based on this technique, which is explained in the *Dvedhā Vitakka Sutta* given in translation at the end of this book.

Of course there are mistaken critics who say that the Buddha did not eliminate emotions altogether because he cultivated positive emotions like *mettā*, *karunā*, *muditā*, and *upekkhā*. Even Western psychologists like Sigmund Freud have pointed out that emotions are disturbances of the body, which are self-centered. This is so, even according to the Buddha. The so-called positive emotions like *mettā*, which the Buddha called, the “divine dwelling” (*brahma vihāra*), are not emotional agitations but tranquil restful states of mind. They appear in perfect form only in the absence of self-centered emotions such as lust (*lobha*), hate (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*), where

delusion is the “sense of self” (*atta*) or notion of “existence” (*bhava*), which is the basis of selfishness. This means, only the emancipated supernormal individuals (*arahat*) who are free from self-centered emotions, and experience genuine selfless universal benevolence (*mettā, karunā, muditā, and upekkhā*).

This means, these emotionless pure states of mind should not be called “positive emotions.” Emotion is a self-centered and agitated state of mind; while purity of mind is a selfless tranquil stillness of mind.

Chapter I

Selective Thinking

As already mentioned, meditation is understood during this beginner's retreat as selective thinking, which is consciously choosing the thoughts we think, instead of unconsciously thinking whatever thought that enters the mind. This means, we must constantly watch the thoughts that enter the mind very scrupulously and choose to keep only the good thoughts and not the bad thoughts.

Normally thoughts come into our minds quite unconsciously, and most of them are emotional. Very often we are even carried away by these emotional thoughts. The moment we become conscious of them, however, they stop. This is because **emotional thoughts can run only unconsciously, and they cannot continue consciously.** Therefore, **the moment we become conscious** of them, they **must naturally stop.**

This is the fact on which even modern psychoanalysis is based. The **aim of psychoanalysis is to make the unconscious thoughts become conscious.** This making of the unconscious emotions conscious seems to be what Daniel Goleman calls **emotional intelligence.** It is also the fact in which the technique of the Buddha was originally based. The **aim of the meditation called *Satipatthāna* is to become conscious of our**

unconscious emotional reactions. If we are unconsciously carried away by our emotional thoughts, we remain not only unconscious but also unhappy. This is what is called worry and daydreaming.

Therefore, **selective thinking**, as we practice it, is **being awake** to and noting the thoughts that come into our minds, followed by **consciously selecting the thoughts** we think, while avoiding the emotional thoughts and developing the **habit of keeping a calm mind**. This means, we must always be conscious of our unconscious emotional thoughts that habitually come into our minds. By doing so we stop all unconscious emotional thoughts, and we begin to **think only consciously and rationally**.

In our meditation we learn to overcome old habits of unconscious emotional thinking and learn to consciously cultivate new habits of calm rational thinking. **Cultivating a new habit, however, means practice, and practice means repetition**, which must be maintained throughout the day. It is like learning to type or play a musical instrument. Only **practice makes one perfect**.

This means, the kind of meditation that we practice is **not an exercise in concentration**, but an exercise in **wakefulness, and selective thinking**. It is not sitting like a statue for twenty minutes or even one hour in the morning, and probably followed similarly in the evening. Selective thinking has **to be done every moment in our waking lives**, whether **walking, standing, sitting, or lying down**. Of course, during this retreat, we do not recommend lying down during the day, because one may fall asleep. At night, however, you can meditate lying down, but if you fall asleep at night, expect to start walking the moment you are awake. **This means, meditation has to be**

practiced all the time during your retreat, even at night, no matter what posture you are in.

In other words, we have to make a serious decision to change our way of thinking, and be willing to cultivate a new way of thinking by repeated practice.

“Sow a thought and reap a habit
Sow a habit and reap a character
Sow a character and reap a destiny.”

If we maintain this consciousness and awareness of thoughts that come into our minds, and **practice selective thinking**, we **overcome the habit of worrying** and being unconscious, and we **cultivate the habit of being conscious and happy all the time**. This leads to the gradual development of consciousness until we **awaken from the dream of existence**, as the Buddha did, whereby all suffering is brought to an end.

There is nothing strenuous about this system of meditation unless one begins to concentrate. **There is no concentration in this form of meditation**. Concentration needs a strenuous effort. **Our aim is to stop concentration, and to keep our mind vacant and calm, and the body relaxed.**

Being relaxed and calm is not easy either, because there is **a natural tendency to unconsciously concentrate on the past or the future** and so become agitated. It is **this tendency that we must overcome**.

There is one important rule, however, that must be carried out, **whatever be the posture you are in**, and that is to **keep your back straight**. This **helps in keeping the mind awake**. If one wants to gain any benefit from this meditation, one has to **practice it conscientiously throughout the retreat and**

even after. It is by constant practice of right thinking that a real transformation and growth can take place in our lives.

Emotions dominate the world

Unfortunately, our blind emotions are dominating our lives. **Children are mainly dominated by emotions.** As we grow up we begin to think more intelligently, but this **intelligence** is mainly **used to gratify our emotions** rather than to guide our emotions. Even though our intelligence begins to decide what is right and wrong, we often tend to be carried away by our emotions, rather than by our intelligent thoughts. Our intelligence often favors the emotions. We also tend to judge others than to judge ourselves. This dominance of emotions prevents us from acting rationally all the time. This is why we often break the five precepts, which we value very much. We even begin to repent later for what we have done. This was why the Buddha said:

*Cittena niyati loko
cittena parikassati
Cittassa eka dhammassa
sabbeva vasamanvagu*

**“Emotions dominate the world
Emotions cause distress
Emotion is that one thing
To which all are spellbound.”**

The world is dominated by emotions. All the modern scientific inventions have been made possible by the intellectual capacity of the human being. But they have been invented because the emotions wanted them. While numerous machines have been invented for the comfort and convenience of the

human being today, many destructive weapons have been constructed that can even destroy the entire planet. Why? While some enjoy life being immersed in sensual pleasures many others suffer in poverty, hunger and starvation. Self-centered emotions are governing the world, not the intellect.

Why is this?

It is important to understand that we humans are animals, though at a more evolved evolutionary level. A part of the animal nature is still within us. We have two minds: an **emotional** animal mind, and a **rational** human mind. It was Sigmund Freud, the famous psychologist who divided the human mind into three parts and called it the **structural hypotheses**:

- 1) Emotional *id* – dominated by pleasure
- 2) Rational *ego* – dominated by reality
- 3) Religious *super ego* – dominated by morality

The Buddha pointed to four division of the personality through personalization (*upādāna*).

- 1) Personalized sense desire (*kāma upādāna*) – (**id**)
- 2) Personalized views (*ditthi upādāna*) – (**ego**)
- 3) Personalized morals (*sīlabbata upādāna*) – (**super ego**)
- 4) Personalized notion of self (*attavāda upādāna*)

Modern Neuroscientist Dr. Paul Maclean's research on the evolution of the brain has led to a division of the human brain into three parts called the Triune Brain: (1) the brainstem, (2) the limbic-system and (3) the prefrontal cerebral-cortex. The lower animals such as the fish and reptiles have only the brainstem along with the cerebellum, which is mainly responsible for finding food and mating. The more evolved animals, the mammals have in addition, the limbic system,

which is responsible for emotions like anger, fear, and lust. It is the cerebral cortex, especially the prefrontal cortex that does the thinking. This cerebral cortex is most developed in the human being. This is why the human being is able not only to think and distinguish between good and bad, right and wrong, truth and falsehood, but he is also able to communicate using language, engage in mathematical calculations, perform scientific research, invent technological machines, solve important problems, and even engage in philosophical speculations.

It is interesting to note that the Buddha was aware of these three phases in the development of the brain, though he did not speak about the brain because people would not believe him if he did so. At that time people were not aware of the importance of the brain.

What he called *viññāna*, however, refers to the activities of the brain stem and the cerebellum. What he called *citta* was the activities of the limbic system. What he called *mano* was the activities of the cerebral cortex, or more precisely the prefrontal cortex. The aim of the Buddha was to **make the human being transcend his animal nature and become fully human, which is not a normal state but a Supernormal state.** This transcendence is achieved by developing the cerebral cortex to a point where it is able to **stop the emotional disturbance** created by the limbic system. This is what the verse quoted below means:

Cognition precedes all experience
Cognition is predominant cognition creates
With vicious cognition if one speaks or acts
Anguish follows as the wheel the drawer

.....
With noble cognition if one speaks or acts
Joy shall follow as the shadow the runner

-- *Dhammapada*

It is this human intelligence, when further evolved that can solve the fundamental problem of existence. Yet it is the lack of intelligence, or the wrong use of intelligence that caters to our self-centered emotions, that can lead us to a range of harmful behaviors including crimes, terrorism, and even wars, that exist in the world today. In fact, it is to transform this especial human intelligence for the benefit of all mankind that the Buddha set out to propagate his Glorious Gospel.

It is important to repeat that **we have two minds**, which are really two activities of the body. (1) the **emotional unconscious** mind (*citta*), and (2) the **rational conscious mind** (*mano*). The emotional mind developed first during evolution and the rational mind developed later. Although of course it is also important to remember that what we call mind is **only an activity of the body**. We do not have an entity separate from the body called “mind.”

Chapter II

Harmonious Perspective

What can save us from this plight is the **Harmonious Perspective** (*samma ditthi*). This special perspective is based on an **understanding** of **how our mind and body works** without a “**self**” or **soul** involved in it. The modern psychologist **Sigmund Freud** described the **mind and body** as an **energy system** that works on the same mechanical forces that govern man-made **machines**. It was the **Buddha** in the East who pointed out twenty-five centuries before this that **body and mind** are **impersonal processes** working on **natural laws** without a “**self**” or **freewill** involved. Even the modern school of Psycho-cybernetics points out that the human mind works like a **goal seeking machine**, similar to a **computer**. Modern **neuroscience researchers on the brain** have pointed out that there is **no place** in the **brain** or anywhere in the **body** that can be referred to as a **mind** or **soul**. What we generally call the mind is an activity of the body, which is controlled by the brain.

Human intelligence has now evolved to the point where it can begin to understand the workings of the human **body** and use that knowledge to gain control over the **blind emotional impulses** that disturb humanity as well as all life on this planet. The recent book, Emotional Intelligence by **Daniel Goleman**

explains what modern researchers have found about the workings of the **so-called mind**.

The **Buddha** has repeatedly pointed out that there is no entity other than the **body** to be referred to as the **mind** or **soul**. The *Tanhāsankaya Sutta* in the *Majjhima Nikāya* explains this fact very clearly. The Buddha used **three words** to refer to **three different activities** of the **nervous system**:

- 1) **Sensory Perception** (*viññāna*)
- 2) **Cognition** (*mano*)
- 3) **Affection** (*citta*).

The Buddha also pointed out that these activities go on quite unconsciously, based on the necessary conditions. They are not really under the power of a conscious thinker. Human thinking becomes conscious only occasionally. Most of the time it is unconscious. Although we think of a permanent conscious thinker, within our body and even in other bodies, there is no such permanent entity or person. It is this occasional consciousness that we generally refer to as “my self,” even though we are not conscious all the time. Most of the time our behavior is unconscious. Consciousness arises only when there is a problem to be solved. These unconscious activities of the body are what Sigmund Freud compared to an iceberg, where most parts are submerged under water, and only a small part remains visible. It is this fact of remaining unconscious most of our time that the Buddha called *anusaya*. *Anusaya* literally means sleeping. What we call the mind therefore is only an activity of the body, a greater part of which is unconscious, and only a small part becomes conscious occasionally. It is that occasional conscious part that we refer to as “self.”

The “self” we commonly imagine, however, is a permanent entity that exists all the time, and not an activity that comes and goes. Such an entity does not exist, however. Conscious thinking is only an activity that runs occasionally and then stops.

The human body is equipped with two faculties, which is called the mind: the **affective** (*citta*) and the **cognitive** (*mano*). Freud called the affective faculty id and the cognitive faculty he called ego. It is the cognitive faculty (*mano*) that can think and also become conscious. Thinking can be done consciously as well as unconsciously. Most of the time it is done unconsciously. We are also carried away by emotions unconsciously most of the time. Emotional *citta* cannot think. Only cognitive *mano* can think. This means emotions are blind, as they cannot think.

Only conscious thinking can stop unconscious emotional agitation. One important advantage that human beings have over other animals is this ability to stop the emotional reaction by conscious thinking. That is what is called will power. Modern neuroscientists have understood that this cognitive thinking is the activity of the prefrontal cortex of the brain. Emotions are started by the amygdala of the limbic system that sends messages to the glands to secrete hormones, which begin to create emotional disturbances, which are activities of the entire body. The prefrontal cortex can send messages to the amygdala to stop the emotional activity and so remain calm. This is the secret behind the Buddha’s ability to eradicate all lust, hate and delusion and so awaken from the dream of existence.

It is by being conscious all the time that we can control our emotions. Therefore what we call meditation is learning to be conscious all the time. **The constant practice of being conscious is what the Buddha called development (*bhāvanā*).**

Emotional development is *citta bhāvanā*, and cognitive development is *paññā bhāvanā*.

The term *satipatthāna* is translated today as mindfulness. The more appropriate term however, is introspection, which is constantly looking at the unconscious mental process that is going on within us. It is only in this way that the unconscious emotional behavior can be stopped. This unconscious emotional behavior can be stopped, only by becoming conscious of it. Emotions cannot continue consciously. They can do so only unconsciously.

Selective thinking and Satipatthāna

What we call selective thinking is to learn to think consciously instead of thinking unconsciously and emotionally. It is only by practicing selective thinking that we gradually enter into introspection (*satipatthāna*)

The normal householders or laymen (*putthujjhana*) tend to become addicted to emotional unconscious thinking. This is why this meditation called selective thinking must be practiced before we begin to practice introspective *Satipatthāna*.

In selective thinking we begin by thinking of the example set by the Buddha and his disciples, and practice universal goodwill wishing all beings to be free from suffering not merely thinking of our own self-centered worries and anxieties. We also begin to reflect on the disadvantages of pursuing sensual pleasures. This helps us to overcome our animalistic emotions. Modern Neuroscientists report that in meditators who had practiced loving kindness meditation the amygdala, the part of the brain that arouses the emotions, was reduced in size.

Unfortunately, there is another problem that we often meet. The cognitive (*mano*) splits in to two – one taking the side of emotions and the other taking the side of thinking. It was Leon Festinger who termed this problem **cognitive dissonance**. In the twentieth century, Sigmund Freud recognized this problem and attempted to find a solution. It is for the same reason that Sigmund Freud called the thinking faculty *ego* and placed the emotional faculty in the neuter gender, using the Latin form of *it*, which is the *id*. Freud thought the problem could be solved this way. Modern cognitive psychologists, however, saw that emotions are aroused by the cognitive interpretation of circumstances. Therefore by changing the interpretation the emotional arousal ceases. Yet they do not completely eliminate emotions. It was the Buddha, who twenty-five centuries earlier solved the problem fully by eradicating all self-centered emotions by recognizing the absence of a real “self.”

The Buddha realized that the conflict arose because people tend to personalize either the affective emotions or the cognitive reasoning. The power rested on the side personalized. Often people tend to personalize the affective side and thereby the emotional part wins. When personalization was stopped, the conflict was resolved. This method of the Buddha resolves the cognitive dissonance between emotion and reason, and brings about a cognitive consonance.

Expression or suppression

The Buddha also explained how people generally deal with emotions in two ways:

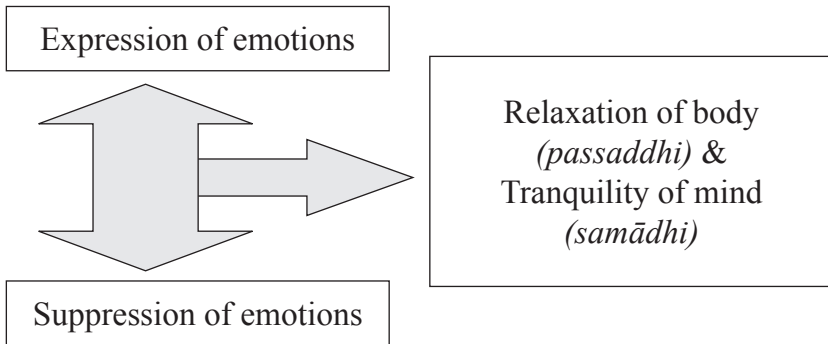
- 1) Unconscious expression (*kāma sukhallikānu yoga*)

- 2) Conscious suppression (*atta kilamatānu yoga*), or unconscious repression.
- 3) Both being unpleasant, He pointed to a medial way, which is conscious relaxation of the body and calmness of the mind.

This brought about the solution of a common problem. People tend to think that:

1. Expression of emotions is the way to happiness
2. Suppression of emotions is the way to be good
3. The discovery of the medial way between these two extremes pointed to a happiness, which was not different from being good.

The Buddha drew attention to this in the *Dhammacakka pavattana Sutta*.



The unconscious expression of emotion in action is the release of tension in four ways:

- a) Effort to obtaining what is desired
- b) Effort to avoid what is hated

- c) Effort to run away from what is feared
- d) Lamentation when all efforts fail.

This is generally understood as seeking happiness.

Asceticism or self-mortification is holding on to the tension in four ways:

- a) Not obtaining what is desired
- b) Not removing what is hated
- c) Not running away from what is feared

It is important to understand that emotion when aroused accompanies tension and discomfort in the body. Therefore the release of tension in action feels comfortable.

What the Buddha pointed out was that if one becomes aware of this tension and then **relaxes** the tension **consciously** instead of **releasing** the tension in action **unconsciously**. This is a better way of dealing with the tension

On the other hand, to **suppress** the emotion is to **maintain** the tension that came up during emotional arousal. This means suppression becomes an **uncomfortable** experience.

Resistance to becoming good

There is a common resistance to becoming good because people tend to think that to be good is to suppress emotions and be unhappy. To be bad is to **express** emotions and be happy. In other words, being good was seen as becoming uncomfortable and unhappy, and being bad was seen as becoming comfortable and happy.

This means to enjoy pleasure is to be bad, and to be uncomfortable is to be good. This is how people normally

tend to think, and this is why people tend to prefer to be happy and bad, rather than be unhappy and good. This was why the Puritans became unpopular.

The wisdom of the Buddha brought about a solution to this problem. The medial path of conscious relaxation of tension resulted in reaching a happiness that was also good.

Chapter III

The Harmonious Orientation

Conscious relaxation brings about a **Harmonious Goal Orientation** (*samma sankappa*) that directs the mind towards the **Harmonious Goal of Life**, which is the **Imperturbable Serenity of Mind**, which is **NIRVĀNA (NIBBĀNA)**. This **Harmonious Goal Orientation** points to a **Harmonious Sense of Values** (*saddhā*). In speaking of sense of values, we enter a discussion of a common problem introduced by Alfred Adler, who was a member of the Vienna Circle of Sigmund Freud, and later separated due to a difference of opinion, and developed a school of psychology called **Individual Psychology**. The problem introduced by Adler was the **inferiority complex**. This is the feeling of inferiority that everyone feels in the presence of someone felt to be superior. This is because of a competitive attitude that everyone feels in the presence of others, which is an egotistic attitude present in all.

All human beings have a sense of values. They have different ideas of what is good or great or superior. And according to each person's sense of values, each person will feel inferior, superior or equal. If a person thinks that wealth is superior, then the moment this person meets a wealthier person,

he/she begins to feel inferior. If a person thinks that high social position is superior, he/she will feel inferior in the presence of any person who is greater in social position. Likewise, if a person thinks that popularity is the greatest thing; that person begins to feel inferior upon meeting a person who is more popular than himself or herself. If a person thinks that enjoying sensual pleasure is the greatest thing, then that person will feel inferior in the presence of someone who is enjoying more sensual pleasures. This is how people feel inferior or superior. This worldly sense of values was shown by the Buddha to be not only unhealthy but it also brings unhappiness, disappointment, frustration, sorrow, pain, anxieties, and worry.

The Buddha pointed out that happiness is to be sought not outside in wealth, status, popularity or sensual pleasures; but rather inside in peace of mind. This happiness within is inner peace, calm or tranquility of mind. If one can understand that inner peace is the greatest thing in the world, then one will automatically begin to seek inner peace. When one meets a calm person, one does not feel inferior any more, but one begins to appreciate the person and one is inspired. When we are really convinced that calmness is the greatest thing, we do not need tranquilizers. Tranquilizers are needed only when we are not convinced that calmness is the greatest thing, because then our goal is not calmness. It is the goal, which is based on our sense of values that determines our calmness.

It is our sense of values therefore that makes us calm or not calm. You have heard the word “Nirvana” or “Nibbana” which is regarded as the ultimate goal of the Buddhist. Some think that Nirvana is some kind of Heaven but that is not what Nirvana is. **Nirvana** simply means the **Imperturbable Serenity of Mind**. (“nir” is the negative prefix like the English “non,” and “vana”

means shaking). “Nirvana” is the tranquility of mind that is not shaken by anything, even in the face of death. It is a tranquility of mind that can never be disturbed. This is why it is called the imperturbable serenity of mind.

We become what we value or worship. When we understand and appreciate the value of Nirvana, it becomes our goal in life. This results in a reorientation of our life to reach this goal. Then, we do not need any special effort to attain Nirvana. **Our life is automatically reorganized to reach that goal.**

This reorganization of life is called entering the stream (*sotapanna*). Even if we cannot reach the end in this present life, we will reach it within seven lives. It is our sense of values, (*saddhā*) or the extent to which we understand and appreciate the value of tranquility that makes us a stream winner.

Therefore, this entering the medial way confirms the well-known saying of the Buddha, **“There is no happiness apart from the Dhamma”** (*sukhaṃ ca na vinā dhammaṃ*).

This explains why the Buddha introduced his teaching as the way to end **unhappiness**, rather than the way to end **evil**. The way to end evil appears as suppression of emotions and unhappiness. This is why religiosity and asceticism is commonly seen as “self-torture.” This is also the reason why the Puritans were hated. If, instead of talking about self-discipline that people seem to deride, we begin to talk about happiness that is derived, not from expression of emotions, but from relaxation of the body and tranquility of the mind. Then being good and being happy becomes the same thing. This kind of happiness is a return to the original equilibrium that was lost when facing the troubles and tribulations of life.

If we examine a baby in a happy mood, we observe that the body is relaxed and the mind is calm. The moment the baby begins to cry, the body is tensed and the mind is disturbed. This means our original state is an undisturbed, and calm state of mind.

As we grow up we find ourselves being disturbed by many favorable as well as unfavorable circumstances. This disturbance is really a reaction of the organism to environmental stimulation where we lose our original equilibrium quite unconsciously. We do not even know how to return to the original state. Often we enjoy this disturbance. We do not realize the extent to which we suffer as a result. Today the modern psychologists call this disturbance, **stress**. It was this **stress** that the Buddha called suffering (*dukkha*) and showed the way out of it, by returning to the original equilibrium or homeostasis, which is NIRVANA.

It is important to understand that the cause of all our unhappiness and our feeling of insecurity in the world are the emotional reactions (*tanha*) to the three kinds of feelings – pleasant, unpleasant and neutral. They are:

- (1) **Urge for pleasure** (*kama tanha*),
- (2) **Urge for existence** (*bhava tanha*) and
- (3) **Urge for non-existence** (*vibhava tanha*).

This is commonly translated as craving, though the more accurate translation is the emotional urge (*tanha*). This self-centred emotional urge is the cause of all our unhappiness, according to the Buddha. Modern research on stress confirms this fact. The term *bhava* is not becoming but being or existence.

Chapter IV

Practice of Selective Thinking

Our meditation in the form of selective thinking is to learn to be conscious and stop reacting emotionally. The self-centered emotional thoughts to be avoided are lust (*lobha*), hate (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*). Delusion is the notion of “existence of a subjective ‘self’ and an objective ‘other’” These emotional thoughts come in the form of the “five hindrances” (*panca nīvarana*):

1. Lust for sensual pleasure (*kāmacchanda*)
2. Hatred or anger (*vyāpāda*)
3. Lethargy and drowsiness (*thīna midda*)
4. Anxiety and worry (*uddhacca kukkucca*)
5. Cognitive dissonance (*vicikiccā*).

These emotional states are disturbances of the mind and body that cause physical and mental turmoil. Professor Hans Selye, who introduced the idea of stress to the modern world, described this turmoil in the form of the **General Adaptation Syndrome** (GAS) consisting of three parts conforming to the Buddha’s description of dukkha:

- 1) **Alarm reaction** = Grief & lamentation (*soka+parideva*)
- 2) **Stage of Resistance** = Physical pain & mental depression (*dukkha + domanassa*)
- 3) **Stage of exhaustion** = Suicide or death (*upāyasa*)

Good thoughts are the conscious peaceful rational thoughts that relax the body, calm the mind, and bring about comfort and happiness. Emotions are unconsciously activated, while good thoughts are consciously thought out. Therefore, selective thinking is the replacement of unconscious bad thoughts with conscious good thoughts. It is substituting good thoughts for bad thoughts. It is simply cultivating the habit of good conscious thinking.

Following is a list of good thoughts in contrast with bad thoughts. The bad thoughts are mainly the five emotional disturbances or hindrances (*panca nīvarana*), and the good thoughts are mainly the opposites of these hindrances. As we begin meditation, the good thoughts are practiced in relation to the Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha. We learn to cultivate good thoughts by reflecting on the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha in relation to the good thoughts, while avoiding thinking of bad thoughts.

Table 1. Thought Discrimination & Corresponding Meditation Techniques

Bad Thoughts	Good Thoughts	Techniques
Emotional thoughts <i>(miccā sankappa)</i>	Calming thoughts <i>(sammā sankappa)</i>	Reflecting on the <i>Dhamma</i>
Passion <i>(rāga)</i>	Dispassion <i>(virāga)</i>	Anatomical meditation
Hatred <i>(vyāpada)</i>	Compassion <i>(mettā)</i>	Universal Benevolence
Boredom, laziness, sleepiness <i>(thina middha)</i>	Energy <i>(viriya)</i>	Reflection on death
Worry, anxiety <i>(uddhacca kukkucca)</i>	Happiness and peacefulness <i>(piti)</i>	Breathing meditation
Cognitive dissonance <i>(vicikiccā)</i>	Cognitive consonance <i>(citta ekaggatā)</i>	Reflecting on the value of Tranquility

Table 2. Meaning of Good Thoughts

DISPASSION: is the opposite of passion. Passion is an emotional reaction to a pleasant sensation, which is also an emotional excitement. It occurs unconsciously, depending on conditions. It occurs only when the necessary conditions are present. Passion is also self-centred and possessive. It leads to conflict and unhappiness. Dispassion, on the other hand, is the absence of emotional excitements. It relaxes the body, and calms the mind. It makes one comfortable, peaceful, and happy. It is unselfish, self-sacrificing, and is interested in the welfare of others.

COMPASSION: is to be interested in the welfare of all beings, without making a distinction between oneself, and others. It recognizes that other's happiness or unhappiness is as important as one's own. Compassion broadens the mind, resulting in freedom from selfishness, worry and unhappiness.

HAPPINESS: is distinct from pleasure. Pleasure is a sensation arising from stimulation of the senses, and is accompanied by tension and emotional excitement. It is a disturbance of the body and mind. True happiness, on the other hand, is the absence of emotional excitement. It is also unselfish, while pleasure is self-centred. Happiness is a selfless freedom from worries and anxieties. It is a pleasant state of undisturbed, relaxed, calm, peaceful, happiness.

TRANQUILLITY: is a state of relaxation of the body and calmness of mind, due to the absence of emotional disturbances. It is a peaceful stillness of mind, which is conducive to clarity of thought, and the gaining of insight into the realities of life.

IN-SIGHT: is the introspective awareness of the inner mental process. When the calm and tranquil mind is turned inwards, it becomes aware of what is going on within. It becomes aware of the unconscious reaction of the body to environmental stimulation of the senses. The reaction is seen in its four stages: perception, conception, emotion, and action. This stops the unconscious reaction, because the unconscious reaction cannot continue while it is conscious. The mind has become conscious of the unconscious process; the determinism of the experience is seen, resulting in seeing the instability, insecurity, and impersonality of the experience. This means the absence of a self or personality is understood. Then one knows that the “Experience”, which is determined by conditions, is all there is. The objective “world” and the subjective “self” are but products of this impersonal experience of perception. This “experience” of “existence” is seen to be unstable, insecure and impersonal, and therefore not desirable. This “under-standing” is “in-sight.”

Therefore, introspective awareness leads to dispassion, which leads to compassion, which leads to happiness, which leads to tranquility, which leads to introspection, which leads to understanding of what is inside, which is in-sight. Insight begins the cyclical sequence again. And so the mind continues recycling this way until it is fully awakened from “the dream of existence”.

Progress in meditation consists of four steps

- 1. Association with those mature in mind** (*sappurisa sevana*) – These are persons who know the Dhamma and have progressed in meditation following the Dhamma.
- 2. Hearing the Dhamma** (*saddhamma savana*) – This is hearing about the Problem of Existence, its cause, its end, and the way to its end.
- 3. Deterministic thinking** (*yoniso manasikara*) – Reflecting on the Sequential Concurrence of Antecedents (*paticca samuppada*).
- 4. Reorganization of life** (*dhammanudhamma patipatti*) **to solve the problem of existence** – This is the Revolution of the Wheel of Experience (*Dhamma cakkha pavattana*), which is a reorganization of life of an individual, which brings about an inner transformation of character. It is achieved by changing the eight constituents of character, by following the Supernormal Eightfold Way, which is a transformation from a self-centred character to a completely selfless one. This transformation results in a paradigm shift from a consciousness of subjective and objective **existence** (*bhava*), to a consciousness of **impersonal experience**, resulting in an elimination of the personality perspective (*sakkāya ditthi*). In other words, it is the adaptation of life according to the Dhamma (*dhammanudhamma patipatti*), which leads to the realization of impersonality (*anatta*) through a paradigm shift.

Chapter V

The wheel of experience (*dhamma cakka*)

The character structure comes in the form of The **Supernormal Eightfold Way**, as follows:

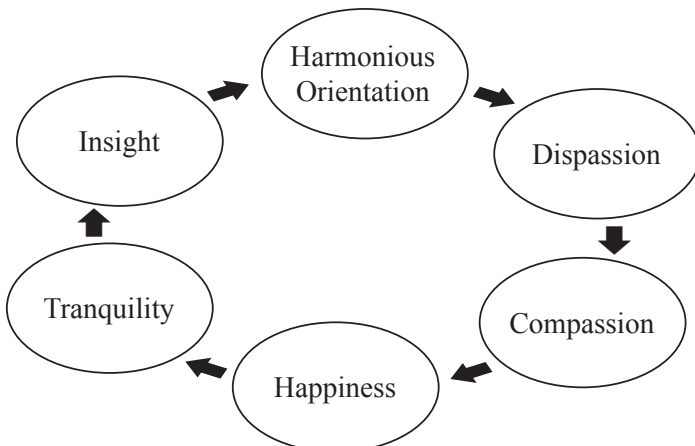
1. Harmonious Perspective
2. Harmonious Orientation
3. Harmonious Speech
4. Harmonious Action
5. Harmonious Life style
6. Harmonious Exercise
7. Harmonious Attention
8. Harmonious Equilibrium

The Supernormal Eightfold Way begins with the **Harmonious Perspective** (*sammā ditthi*), which is a comprehension of the **problem of existence** and its solution. This is followed by a **harmonious reorientation**, (*sammā sankappa*), which is a **goal reorientation**. This goal reorientation occurs through a **change in visualization of the goal**. It is important to understand this fact. From this point onwards, it is only a matter of moving towards the new goal **visualized**, which is a return to the original state of equilibrium (**homeostasis**) that was lost during the chaotic shambles of life.

In the beginner's retreat we mainly focus on the first five steps in the Supernormal Eightfold Way. This means we focus on: the 1) Harmonious Perspective, 2) the Harmonious Orientation, and 3) Harmonious Discipline in the form of speech, action, and lifestyle of the individual meditator. The other parts of the Supernormal Eightfold Way will be practiced, only at the second and third levels of the retreat.

1. **Harmonious Orientation**, leads to
2. **Dispassion**, which leads to
3. **Compassion**, which leads to
4. **Happiness**, which leads to
5. **Tranquility**, which leads to
6. **In-sight**, becoming aware of the process of perception
7. **Leading to further dispassion**, beginning the cycle again.

This is how the gradual process of growth, or evolution of consciousness takes place, leading to **Awakening from the Dream of Existence (*sammasambodhi*)**.



Details of the procedure of selective thinking

Stage I: Recollections (anussati)

Reflect on:

- (1) Buddha – who became perfect in Tranquility
- (2) Dhamma – the technique of Tranquilization
- (3) Sangha – the followers who follow the way
- (4) Oneself – who begins to follow the way

We begin by focusing on good thoughts:

- (1) Awareness of the realities of life: –
Instability, painfulness, impersonality
- (2) Dispassion towards everything
- (3) Compassion for all beings
- (4) Happiness through tranquility
- (5) Tranquility due to absence of expectation
- (6) In-sight into impersonality of experience.

At first, we note these states of mind in **concrete** form as attributes of **THE BUDDHA**. Next we reflect on the nature of these attributes in **abstract** form in the **DHAMMA**. Next we notice these attributes in **growing form** as present in the **SANGHA**, in variable degrees. They are also noticed in the **beginners form** within **ONESELF** as one begins the practice.

Recollection of the Buddha (*Buddhānussati*)

Reflecting on the BUDDHA, we think of his attributes: dispassion (*virāga*), compassion (*mettā, karunā*), selfless happiness (*muditā*), and introspective apperception (*upekkhā*), he depicts these attributes in perfect concrete form.

Dispassion

Though born in a royal family in the lap of luxury, and destined to become a Righteous Global Emperor (*cakkavatti rājā*), according to soothsayers, he gave up his life of luxury, his loving father and foster mother, his beautiful wife, his newly born son, and even his glorious future, and entered the life of an ascetic, living in the forest, devoted to meditation. This was his **Great Dispassionate Renunciation** (*Mahā Abhinikkhamana*).

The reason for his Great Renunciation (*Mahā Abhinikkhamana*) was his recognition of **the realities of life**: birth, old age, disease, and death, through the **four pre-cognitions**: an old person, a sick person, a corpse, and a renunciate. Then the **Harmonious Perspective** dawned upon him. He began to realize that every living being on earth is subject to aging, decay, and death. Though most people take that for granted and attempt to forget it by immersing themselves in sensual pleasures, he saw one person who had renounced this common pursuit of pleasure, and set out to tackle the problem by eradicating the common human urge for pleasure. So Prince Siddhatta the Bodhisatta thought that this was the right path to follow. Instead of seeking help in Supernatural beings to get eternal life in heaven, as others do, **he made use of his human intelligence**. His understanding of the realities of life, through human intelligence, lead to a reorientation in his life. His mind was directed towards the **only worthwhile goal in life**, which was to **stop being carried away by animalistic emotions** and to **begin using human intelligence to solve the problem of mortality**, for the **sake of all beings**.

He did not see **death** as the opposite of life, but as a **part of life**. He saw that **birth** and **death** are only the **two ends** of the **same stick** of life. **Life is not a static existence**, but

a **dynamic process** of **change** starting at **birth** and ending at **death**, depending on **conditions**, similar to a **flame**. When the flame is extinguished, if you ask, “where did the flame go?” The answer is obvious, “it has not gone anywhere. It has only disappeared due to the absence of the **conditions** that **continued** its **activity**.” In the same way, life is not an **entity** that **exists**, but an **activity** that **dies** and is **reborn**, **continues** or **stops**. This means, there is **no death**, **no rebirth** for one who has **awakened** from the **dream of existence**. If one does not **exist**, one cannot **die** or be **reborn**.

The Buddha saw that the normal human being selfishly runs after things that are **supposed to exist** but subject to decay, disease, and death. They also become **attached** to these things and **personalize** them, and are **reluctant** to **let go** of them. This leads not only to **much suffering**, but also to much **crime**, **wars**, **terrorism** and **all disasters**.

He also realized that **those who renounce the worldly pursuits** and stop going after things that are subject to aging, disease, and death **are doing the right thing**. Therefore, he thought: “**I will do the same** and also **find the solution to the problem of existence** for the **sake of all beings**.”

It was this decision that led to the **Great Renunciation** of the Buddha (*MahaAbhinikkhamana*), which began as a supernormal transformation within. This special human being, went through a natural psychological evolutionary process, where this human being was able to overcome all human weaknesses through the development of dispassion, compassion, happiness, tranquility, and in-sight, ending in a supernormal **paradigm shift**, from **existence** (*bhava*) to **experience** (*dhamma*), thus terminating existence (*bhava nirodha*) by **Awakening** (*sambodhi*) from the **dream of existence** (*bhava nidra*) and “entering the **reality of**

impersonal experience,” free from the personality perspective (*sakkāya ditthi*) which is the **ultimate freedom from all suffering.**

His **in-sight** regarding the **impersonality of all suffering beings,** and their **freedom through recognizing this fact,** was the **gospel he set out to preach to the world.** He made an effort **to free the whole world from suffering,** by opening the **secret behind suffering.** Only a **few could really benefit,** while the great **majority continued to suffer** in their pursuit of pleasure.

Compassion (*karunā*)

The Buddha became aware that **all beings are born with a self-centred struggle for existence,** consciously or unconsciously, and that the **notion of “self” is responsible for all the suffering** one creates within oneself as well as in others. He also saw that **this self-centered mind can be broadened** and made to think of the welfare of all beings and so cultivate a **broad mind called Universal Benevolence (*mettā*).**

This universal benevolence when cultivated grows into universal compassion (*karunā*). This is the depth dimension of *mettā*, where **no distinction** is made between **oneself and others.** Others become **as important as one-self.** This way the **self-consciousness is lost,** and all **suffering disappears** with it, just as a **river falling into the ocean loses its identity.**

Selfless Happiness (*muditā*)

The Bodhisatta’s **loss of self-consciousness and disappearance of suffering** resulted in the **happiness of selflessness (*muditā*).** This selfless happiness is not an emotional

excitement but a state of **complete tranquility**, with the **mind focused within**, which is quite **undisturbed** by the **changing vicissitudes of life**, such as **gain and loss, fame and ill-fame, praise and blame, or pleasure and pain.**

Insight (*paññā*)

As his mind became focused within *upekkhā* (*upa* = within; *ikkati* = seeing). This helped him become aware of the **inner experience**. The inner experience was not the object seen but **the process of perception**, that sees the object which he **analyzed** into the **five constituents** (*pancakkhandā*). This made him realize that the **sense-of-self** comes into being due to **personalization** of the **constituents of perception**. He also began to realize that **this mental process of perception and conception creates the objective “world”** as well as the **subjective “self”** that is supposed to **“exist”** and thus creates the **“Experience of Suffering.”**

The **self, the world, and existence**
creates a **relationship**
which is a
delusion
Suffering is not due to
death and rebirth of a “self that exists,”
but due to
the **false notion of existence**
of a self and other

The “self,”
Is Created by
Personalization
of the subjective constituents of perception
and the “world,”
is created by
alienation of the objective experience

This is
Done by an emotional reaction
TANHA

“Self” and “existence” are static concepts in a
dynamic reality

To **exist** is to **occupy space** in the **past, present** and **future**

The **past** --- is **gone** --- does it **exist**?

The **future** --- is **not come** --- does it **exist**?

The **present** is becoming the **past** every fraction of a second

Does the present exist?

Let go of the past, let go of the future
Let go of the present, let go of existence
The mind that is freed from every existence
Will never be born nor die again.

*Muñca pure munca pacchato
Majje muñca bhavissa pāragū
Sabbattha vimuttamānaso
Na puna jātijaram upehisi.*

-Dhammapada 348

The **Buddha's great compassion** (*karunā*) **broadened his mind** to the extent that he did not see a distinction between himself and others and **so lost his self-consciousness**, which **resulted in freedom from all suffering**.

He **won the selfless happiness** (*muditā*). This selfless happiness was a calm, peaceful, restful state of mind that was **never disturbed by the changing vicissitudes** of life (*attha loka dhamma*). This was why the **mind of the Buddha** always remained **dispassionate, compassionate, happy, tranquil, and wise**. He also **encouraged others to do the same** and free themselves from suffering. The past doesn't exist. The future doesn't exist. The present does not exist?

If **one** does not exist, can one **die** or be **reborn**?

Reflecting on the Dhamma

These **attributes** comprise the **essence** of the BUDDHA, which is DHAMMA. The Buddha is Dhamma in **concrete** form, while *Dhamma* is Buddha in **abstract** form. This was why the Buddha said, "One who sees **Me** sees the **Dhamma**, and one who sees the **Dhamma** sees **Me**."

Dhamma can also be seen as the **essence of spirituality**, or the **essence of Divinity** or **God**, The Buddha called this essence of divinity (*brahma vihāra*) the **Divine Dwelling** or the **Dwelling of God**, which was described in the form of the Fourfold Experience:

1. **Universal Benevolence** (*mettā*),
2. **Universal Compassion** (*karunā*),
3. **Selfless Happiness** (*muditā*),
4. **Insightful Apperception** (*upekkhā*),

which matures into the **Imperturbable Serenity** (*Nirvana*) which is unaffected by the changing vicissitudes of life. This is also reminiscent of the well-known statement “**God is Love.**”

Therefore, when reflecting on the *Dhamma*, one should reflect on these same attributes of the Buddha, but in abstract form: **Dispassion** (*virāga*), **Compassion** (*mettā, karunā,*), **Selfless Happiness** (*muditā*), **Tranquility** (*samādhi*), **Apperception** (*upekkha*) and **In+sight** (*paññā*). By understanding the meaning of these attributes, one begins to appreciate them and cultivate them. Understanding the *Dhamma* is important for the practice, because it is the extraordinary technique of purifying the mind. *Dhamma* includes the **means** (*magga*) to *Nirvāna* as well as the **end result** (*phala*), which represent the benefits gained from the practice.

For an intelligent person the *Dhamma* becomes a **map** to find the **way to Nirvana**. This *Dhamma* is the Harmonious Perspective. Without the *Dhamma* one cannot reach the goal. We cannot depend on teachers blindly, because they may lead us in the wrong direction. It is by understanding the road properly by ourselves and for our selves that we can reach the goal. Treading the spiritual path is a matter of intelligence and strength of mind. This is why the Buddha said, “I do not teach the *Dhamma* like showing the way to a blind man who has to trust me blindly and follow me, but I am like a surgeon who operates on the eye and makes the blind man see for himself. Then he has to have confidence only in himself and not in me.” The more we understand the way, the more we begin to follow the way. The more we follow the way, the more we begin to understand the way. It works both ways, and so we reach the goal quite easily. Knowledge of the benefits of the practice also encourages one to practice.

Reflecting on the *Sangha*

The **Dhamma** was what the Buddha taught His followers to practice. The **SANGHA**, being the community of followers, that practice the Dhamma, they individually possess these qualities to different degrees. Each individual will keep on practicing till each individual reaches the state of perfection, in this life itself or in another life to come. When we think of the *Sangha*, we think of these same qualities generally present in the Sangha. We do not think of individuals but we think of the community as a whole. We understand that there are members of the Sangha who had reached the highest level of perfection and those who are on the way. We also know that there are those who are at our own level. Sometimes we are aware of some who are even below our level, just as when standing on an escalator we can see people at the top, those at the bottom, and those standing midway. When we think of the Sangha we see people at different levels. We don't blame or condemn a person at the lower level for being at that level because they are on the way to Nirvāna. We only get courage and confidence, "If that person can reach the higher level someday, I can also reach the higher level someday". This gives us inspiration and courage to practice. When we consider how even those at the lowest levels will someday reach the highest, we are inspired to practice. Reflecting on the Sangha we reflect on the same attributes. We should not criticize and condemn the Sangha even for being at the bottom. Thinking thus should encourage us: "if that person can reach the top, I too can."

Reflecting on Oneself

We can cultivate these same qualities **WITHIN US**. We can examine ourselves to discover to what extent we possess these qualities within us, and also to what extent these qualities are absent in us. This tells us how much we need to practice in order to reach perfection. This knowledge inspires and encourages us. When we reflect on the Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha and join the Sangha we are inspired to cultivate these qualities to perfection within us. When we reflect on ourselves we see ourselves also standing on the escalator though moving upwards little by little. Even if the escalator is slow we are still moving. We are progressing. Our speed depends on our level of enthusiasm by reflecting on the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. The more we reflect the more our enthusiasm.

Chapter VI

Stage II: Cultivation of Good Thoughts

After reflecting on the Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha, and even on oneself, and having got the inspiration to practice, one then begins to practice cultivating these qualities within oneself by reflecting on:

AWARENESS OF THE REALITIES OF LIFE	Reflecting on the instability, painfulness & impersonality of all conditioned phenomena.
DISPASSION	Reflection on the danger, futility, and mental confusion connected with the pursuit of sensual pleasure.
COMPASSION	Selfless interest in the welfare of all beings. Here, we are not merely feeling sorry for ourselves but for all beings that are suffering.
HAPPINESS	Experiencing the happiness of freedom from selfishness

<p style="text-align: center;">TRANQUILLITY</p>	<p>Stillness of mind derived from lack of emotional disturbances.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">INSIGHT</p>	<p>Personalising the five constituents of perception makes the “Self.” “Life” is only a changing process of birth, aging and death. A baby grows and becomes a young man or women who gets married. Then they soon grow old and die. What is life? Is it a real existence? Or is it a non-existing process of activity like a flame?</p>

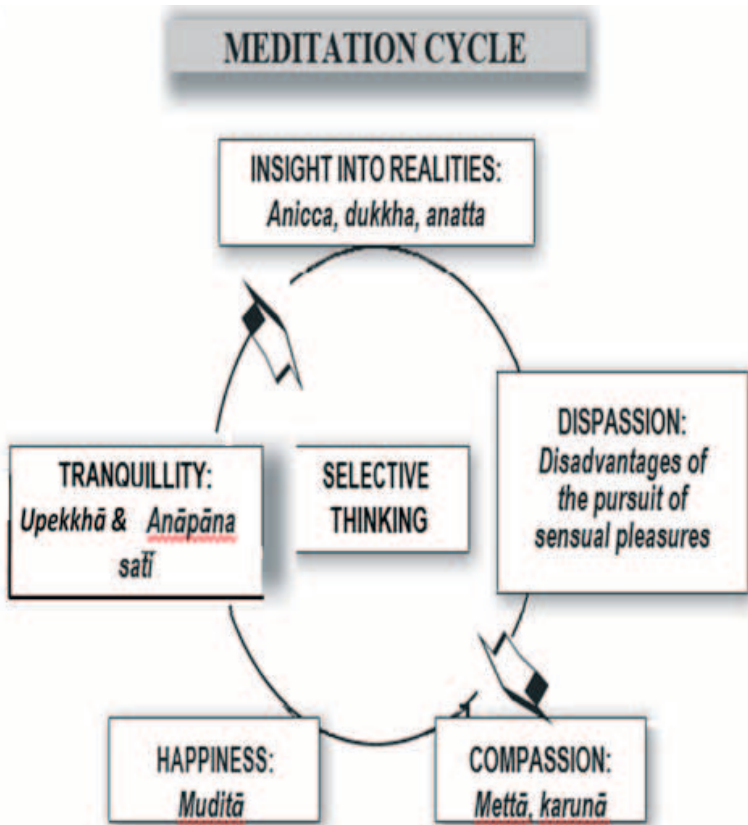
The harmonious cycle of meditation

This method of meditation begins a harmonious cycle that brings about a transformation within an individual, resulting in gaining the qualities of dispassion, compassion, happiness, tranquility and insight into reality. Remember this change is gradual and not sudden. It depends on the extent of practice.

Reflecting on the realities of life

Our body is an organism in an environment. In this body there are five senses. Activities in the environment stimulate these senses. The organism reacts to the stimulation. This reaction is a chain reaction consisting of:

Perception,
Cognition,
Affection,
Action and Consequence.



Tilakkhana bhāvanā

Meditation on The threefold nature of all that is supposed to exist

The logic of this reflection

1. Instability (*aniccā*)

Every object perceived is a **mental construct** (*sankhāra*) or phenomenon.

Mental constructs are of two kinds: **subjective** and **objective**

Every subjective construct is **personalized** as “**mine.**” Every objective construct is **alienated** as **other “things”** in the external “world.”

What has been personalized as “**mine,**” becomes – **the “self”**

This **personalized subject** and the **alienated object** build an **emotional relationship** between the **subjective self** and the **objective other** in the form of **love** or **hate** or **fear.**

Which **results** in **suffering.**

Every **construct** is **dependent** on **conditions.**

What is dependent on conditions is **unstable** (*anicca*)

All constructs are unstable (*sabbe sankhāra aniccā*).

2. Painfulness (*dukkha*)

All constructs that I call mine or myself are **unstable**.

What is unstable is insecure.

What is insecure is **unpleasant**.

What is unpleasant is **painful** (*dukkha*).

All constructs are painful (*sabbe sankhāra dukkhā*).

3. Impersonality (*anatta*)

What is painful is **not as I want**.

What is not as I want is **not under my power**.

What is not under my power is **not mine**.

What is not mine **cannot be personalized**.

What cannot be personalized is **impersonal** – not me, or mine, or my “self.”

All experience is impersonal (*sabbe dhammā anattā*).

All that is impersonal **should be discarded**.

To discard is to **become dispassionate**.

What cannot be personal **should not be personalized**.

If what cannot be personal has been personalized, grief, lamentation, pain, distress, and depression follows.

To solve this problem one should depersonalize.

All **constructs** when **depersonalized** **cease to be uncomfortable**.

When one **understands** the **instability, painfulness** and the **impersonality** of things, one becomes **dispassionate** and also **compassionate** towards all beings, who are suffering, without making any distinction between oneself and others, which leads to **selfless happiness**, which is tranquil, and **introspective**.

Through **introspection** (*satipatthāna*), which is focusing attention within, one can apperceive (*upekkhā*) which is to become aware of the process of perception, which can lead to **analysis** of the **five constituents** (*pancakkhanda*) of the **process of perception**:

- 1) Mental image (*rūpa*),
- 2) Feeling (*vēdanā*),
- 3) Sensation (*saññā*),
- 4) Construction (*sankhāra*),
- 5) Perception (*viññāna*).

These constituents of the process of perception are generally **personalized** as “**mine.**” It is in this way that the **personality** is formed, though they are really impersonal processes.

By reflecting on the **threefold nature** (*tilakkhana*) of these **impersonal processes**, one can **depersonalize** the **five constituents of perception** (*pancupādānakkanda*), which have been already **personalized**. By thus **depersonalizing** all experience, the **personality** is **lost** and **all suffering** comes to an **end**.

All **suffering** is **self-centred**. When the **self** disappears all **suffering disappears**.

All **normal human beings are suffering** from the **delusion of existence**. They **imagine they exist, when they do not exist**.

All common folk are **insane** (*sabbe putujjana ummattakā*) said the Buddha.

When they **awaken** from the **dream of existence**, they become **sane** and **all suffering comes to an end**.

Isn't this Real Buddhist Psychotherapy?

Chapter VII

Practicing penetrative awareness

General – Personal

This is to apply the Harmonious Perspective in detail on everything we have personalized.

- a. I am subject to aging. I have not transcended aging.
- b. I am subject to disease. I have not transcended disease.
- c. I am subject to death. I have not transcended death.

All that is near and dear to me is subject to change and separation. When these things are changing and separating all that is left is my emotional state (*kamma*). My emotional state makes me unhappy. By depending on changing external conditions for happiness I experience sorrow and unhappiness. By not depending on these external conditions for my happiness, my unhappiness ceases. Therefore I begin to cultivate: dispassion, compassion, happiness and tranquility. This way, I gain true happiness. Pleasure is stimulation of the senses; happiness is a peaceful tranquil state of mind free from emotional agitation.

Specific – Personal

1. My job is dependent on conditions.
Because it is dependent on conditions, it is unstable.
Because it is unstable, it is uncomfortable.
Because it is uncomfortable, it is not under my control.
Because it is not under my control, it is not mine.
Because it is not mine, it is not my “self,” nor a part of my “self.”
2. My social status is dependent on conditions.
Because it is dependent on conditions, it is unstable.
Because it is unstable, it is uncomfortable,
Because it is uncomfortable, it is not under my control.
Because it is not under my control, it is not mine.
Because it is not mine, it is not my “self,” or a part of my “self.”
3. My wealth (bank account, house, car and other properties) is dependent on conditions.
Because it is dependent on conditions, it is unstable.
Because it is unstable, it is uncomfortable.
Because it is uncomfortable, it is not under my control.
Because it is not under my control, it is not mine.
Because it is not mine, it is not my “self,” nor a part of my “self.”
4. My family members (parents, spouse, children and other relatives) are dependent on conditions.
Because they are dependent on conditions, they are unstable.
Because they are unstable, they are uncomfortable.
Because they are uncomfortable, they are not under my control.

Because they are not under my control, they are not mine.
Because they are not mine, they are not my “self,” nor a part of my “self.”

5. My friends and associates are dependent on conditions.
Because they are dependent on conditions, they are unstable.
Because they are unstable, they are uncomfortable.
Because they are uncomfortable, they are not under my control.
Because they are not under my control, they are not mine.
Because they are not mine, they are not my “self,” nor a part of my “self.”
6. My self (body, sensations, emotions, and thoughts) is dependent on conditions.
Because it is dependent on conditions, it is unstable.
Because it is unstable, it is uncomfortable,
Because it is uncomfortable, it is not under my control.
Because it is not under my control, it is not mine,
Because it is not mine, it is not my “self,” nor a part of my “self.”

General – Personal

1. I am subject to aging. I am not free from aging.
2. I am subject to disease. I am not free from disease.
3. I am subject to death. I am not free from death.

All that is desirable and pleasant to me will change and separate from me. Therefore, there is nothing to desire or personalize. All that is left for me is my emotional state. This emotional state is my *kamma*. My *kamma* is the emotions I live with. It is this *kamma* that gives me happiness or unhappiness.

It is due to these emotions that I will be reborn. Therefore, I will not hold onto things that are unstable (what is subject to old age, disease and death). My only purpose in life therefore is to purify my thoughts. *Kamma* is my only inheritance. I am born of *kamma*. My friends, relatives, parents are also *kamma*. My only refuge is my *kamma*. Whatever I do, whether good or bad, it becomes my inheritance. This is the way of life, not only for me, but for all beings.

(This last thought should lead to dispassion within oneself, as well as compassion for all beings. This also leads to the loss of self-consciousness, which results in the disappearance of unhappiness and calmness of mind).

Specific – Universal

1. For all human beings, their jobs are dependent on conditions.
Because they are dependent on conditions, they are unstable.
Because they are unstable, they are uncomfortable.
Because they are uncomfortable, they are not under their control, because they are not under their control, they are not theirs, because they are not theirs, they are not themselves or parts of themselves.
2. For all human beings, their social status is dependent on conditions.
Because it is dependent on conditions, it is unstable.
Because it is unstable, it is uncomfortable.
Because it is uncomfortable, it is not under their control.
Because it is not under their control, it is not theirs.

Because it is not theirs, it is not themselves or a part of themselves.

3. For all human beings, their wealth: bank account, house, car and other properties, is dependent on conditions.

Because it is dependent on conditions, it is unstable.
Because it is unstable, it is uncomfortable.

Because it is uncomfortable, it is not under their control.

Because it is not under their control, it is not theirs.

Because it is not theirs, it is not themselves or a part of themselves.

4. For all human beings their family members: parents, spouse, children, and other relatives are dependent on conditions, because they are dependent on conditions, they are unstable.

Because they are unstable, they are uncomfortable.

Because they are uncomfortable, they are not under their control.

Because they are not under their control, they are not theirs, because they are not theirs, they are not themselves or parts of themselves.

5. For all human beings, their social status is dependent on conditions.

Because it is dependent on conditions, it is unstable.

Because it is unstable, it is uncomfortable.

Because it is uncomfortable, it is not under their control.

Because it is not under their control, it is not theirs.

Because it is not theirs, it is not themselves or a part of themselves.

6. For all human beings, their wealth: bank account, house, car and other properties, is dependent on conditions.
Because it is dependent on conditions, it is unstable.
Because it is unstable, it is uncomfortable.
Because it is uncomfortable, it is not under their control.
Because it is not under their control, it is not theirs.
Because it is not theirs, it is not themselves or a part of themselves.
7. For all human beings, their family members: parents, spouse, children, and other relatives, are dependent on conditions because they are dependent on conditions they are unstable.
Because they are unstable, they are uncomfortable.
Because they are uncomfortable, they are not under their control.
Because they are not under their control, they are not theirs, because they are not theirs, they are not themselves or parts of themselves.
8. For all human beings, their friends and associates are dependent on conditions.
Because they are dependent on conditions, they are unstable.
Because they are unstable, they are uncomfortable.
Because they are uncomfortable, they are not under their control.
Because they are not under their control, they are not theirs, because they are not theirs, they are not themselves or parts of themselves.

9. For all beings, their selves (bodies, sensations, emotions, and thoughts) are dependent on conditions.

Because they are dependent on conditions, they are unstable.

Because they are unstable, they are uncomfortable.

Because they are uncomfortable, they are not under their control.

Because they are not under their control, they are not theirs, because they are not theirs, they are not themselves or parts of themselves.

General – Universal

1. All beings are subject to aging. All beings are not free from aging.

2. All beings are subject to disease. All beings are not free from disease.

3. All beings are subject to death. All beings are not free from death.

All that is near and dear to them are subject to change and separation. When these things are changing and separating all that is left is the emotional state (*kamma*). This emotional state makes them unhappy. By depending on these changing conditions for happiness, they experience sorrow and unhappiness. While not depending on these external conditions for their happiness, they cultivate dispassion, compassion, happiness and tranquility. This brings them true happiness.

Gain and loss, fame and notoriety, praise and blame, pleasure and pain are all unstable, and changing. They are the changing vicissitudes of life. Changes come in the form of:

Gain or loss (*lāba, alāba*)

Status or loss of status (*yasa, ayasa*)

Praise or blame (*pasansā, nindā*)

Pleasure or pain (*sukha, dukkha*)

May my mind be unshaken by these changing vicissitudes of life. May the minds of all beings be unshaken by these vicissitudes of life. May all beings be well and happy!

(Note: Try to maintain the above thoughts in your mind constantly, by repeating them regularly).

Chapter VIII

Dispassion

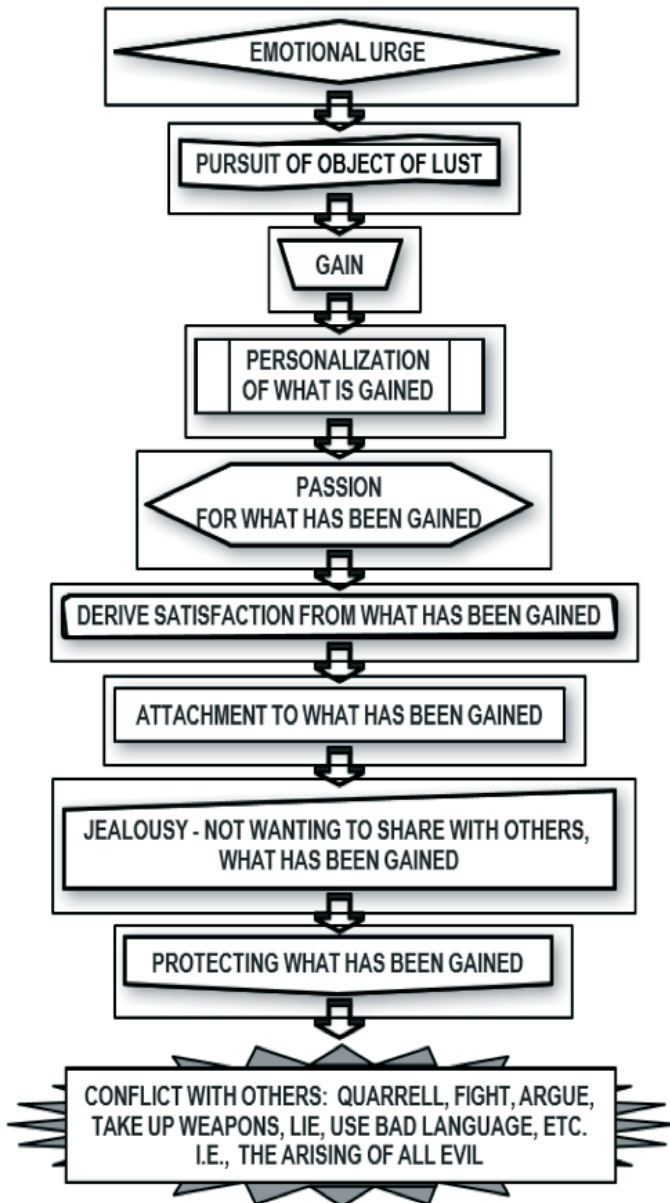
Reflect on the disadvantages of the pursuit of sensual pleasure and attachments. Reflect on the following in relation to concrete examples from your own life. Examine your own past in the light of this teaching:

1. The arousal of a desire for something pleasant, or a hatred for something unpleasant, brings about discomfort. The more unpleasant or more pleasant the object hated or desired is, the more uncomfortable one feels.
2. The desire when not satisfied, the frustration is even worse. This discomfort can create discomfort even for others. This discomfort when extreme can even result in crime or suicide. It is not possible to satisfy desires always.
3. The discomfort in the struggle to satisfy desire could be extreme. If one fails to satisfy the desire after much struggle, it can even be a verse disappointment.
4. Satisfaction after success from a difficult struggle can be great. This happiness after success, however, is only a release of the tension that came from from the desire.

5. Once the object desired is obtained, we cease to derive any pleasure out of it. It can even become stale and unpleasant. Such pleasure is impermanent.
6. What has been personalized as “ mine” when lost can be felt as a loss of a part of one-self. Even the thought of losing brings about a feeling of insecurity and anxiety. This makes one begin to protect what has been obtained and personalized.
7. The struggle to protect and maintain what has been personalized brings much worry and anxiety, and even mental and physical discomfort.
8. Finally, we cannot avoid parting from what has been obtained and personalized. When parting, the discomfort is very great.
9. The cycle starts all over again in spite of the suffering involved. How stupidly we suffer, being carried away by our emotions. Blinded by our emotions, we never become aware of the suffering. We come into being through personalization, and begin the cycle of suffering recurrently.
10. It is only by becoming aware of this suffering that we can become free.

The flow chart below illustrates the perils of the pursuit of sensual pleasures, as described in the *Mahanidana Sutta* in the *Dialogues of the Buddha (DB)*.

PERILS OF THE PURSUIT OF SENSUAL PLEASURES



11. These emotional impulses go on quite unconsciously. Therefore they are not things done by us. It is something that happens to us without our knowing. We are the victims of a natural process. The wisdom of the Buddha shows us the way out. This way out is to be conscious all the time. Then only can we be free of this pain that we suffer from.

Contemplation on death (*maranānussathi*)

(*A translation of Pali stanzas*)

1. Death is a news we hear every day
Death comes to all who are born.
Life is a lamp that easily blows out
Let's reflect on death in this way
2. Death comes to all to man or women
To the rich and the poor alike
Why not me? I too shall die
Death is sure to come someday.
3. Birth is always
Followed by death
Just as an enemy that follows behind
Seeking the opportunity to kill.
4. Life moves fast
Not halting a minute
As the sun that has risen
Hastens to set.
5. Life does end,
Like a lightning flash
A bubble, a dewdrop, or a line on water
Death can be swift as a fatal shot
6. Even Lord Buddha
With wisdom and power
Surrendered to universal mortality
What could be said of this humble me?

7. No doubt of course I certainly must die
I may die at the twinkle of an eye
Through a heart attack, an accident, or a gun shot
We all are susceptible to death.

Rationale for contemplating death:

- Common folk (*putthujjhana*) avoid thinking of death always, and immerse themselves in sensual pleasures. “Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow you’ll die.” Is this an attempt to escape reality? Why is reality so frightening? People **moan and lament** when faced with **death. Why?**
- We are so attached to existence. The **purpose of this meditation** is to **face this reality of death**, and be rid of the **notion of existence**, which brings death. The **solution** is **not an escape into fantasy**, or a hope for eternal life after death, which cannot be proved until **death intervenes to dispel all doubts.**
- **Death** is a **part of existence**. All that exists has to die. We cannot speak of existence without speaking of death. **Death** is a **part of existence** not **the opposite of existence**. One has to exist before one can die.
- Do we really exist? What is existence? Is existence a fact?
- To exist is to occupy space and time. Do we occupy space and time? It is the body that occupies space. The mind does not occupy space. Does it occupy time?
- To occupy time is to have a past, a present and a future. The body does occupy space and time. The past of the

body is birth and the future of the body is death. The present is only growth and decay.

- The past does not really exist. It has gone. The future does not exist. It has not yet come. Does the present exist? It is becoming the past every fraction of a second. Do we then really exist even in the present? If we do not really exist, can we really die? Both **existence** and **death** are **delusions**, said the Buddha. If so, there is **nothing to worry about**. But we all worry about death because **we think we exist**. Our belief in existence is **irrational**. It is only an emotional **feeling**. When the mind is **free of emotions** the feeling of **existence disappears**. Only then can we be happy.
- So let us begin to meditate and **free the mind of emotions**. Emotion is a **motion of the body** and mind. The mind free of emotions is the mind that is **still**. Don't be lazy or frightened to **still the mind**.
- This meditation on death is to create a **sense of urgency**, which helps overcome laziness and drowsiness (*thīna middha*), which reduces mental alertness during meditation.

Meditation on the repulsiveness of the body **(*asubha bhāvana*)**

(A translation of Pali stanzas)

1. We call this body, “myself.” Others too refer to this body as “me.” We do not realize that this body is repulsive not only to others, but also to ourselves. It is useful to reflect on the repulsive nature of this body. It helps us overcome our attachment to the body.
2. Let us reflect on 32 unpleasant parts of this body: solids, liquids, gases and empty space. This body is repulsive in respect of colour, shape and smell.
3. Things that are within the body are more disgusting than what comes out of it. Even though the contents that fall off the body are seen to be filthier than those inside.
4. Like a worm born in filth, this body is born in filth. Like a cesspit this body is full of filth.
5. Just as fat pours out of a pot even so impure matter flows out of this body.
6. Like a cesspit, this body is a host to millions of putrefying organisms.

Rationale for contemplating the repulsiveness of the body:

- The Buddha has referred to 32 parts of the body for reflection during meditation (MN 119).
- The Blessed One has explained: “How to reflect on the body, how it should be cultivated and developed, how it should be pursued so as to be of great fruit &

benefit? “Just as if a sack with openings at both ends were full of various kinds of grain -- wheat, rice, mung beans, kidney beans, sesame seeds, husked rice -- and a man with good eyesight, pouring it out, were to reflect, “This is wheat. This is rice. These are mung beans. These are kidney beans. These are sesame seeds. This is husked rice.” In the same way, the monk reflects on this very body from the soles of the feet up to the crown of the head and down again, surrounded by skin and full of various kinds of repulsive things: ‘In this body there are head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin, muscles, tendons, bones, bone marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, lungs, spleen, bladder, large intestines, small intestines, stomach, contents of intestines, brain, bile, mucus, pus, blood, sweat, fat/oil, tears, ear-wax, saliva, nasal mucus, fluid in the joints, urine.’”

- This meditation helps overcome the normal lustful adoration of the body, especially during sexual engagements. It also helps overcome feelings of inferiority and superiority in comparison with other bodies.
- When we are attracted to the human body covered with fashionable clothing, jewellery, perfumes and makeup, we often forget the real nature of the body. This meditation reminds us of the real nature of the body.
- The purpose of this meditation is not to develop hatred towards people, but to reflect on the disgusting nature of the human body. If this meditation turns into a hatred for others, one should recognize the disgusting nature of one’s own body and practice *mettā* meditation towards all beings.

- This mediation practice can be elaborated by using visual aids such as diagrams and pictures of human anatomy.
- The reader is encouraged to refer to the *kāyagatāsati sutta* in the Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha (MN, 119), for further details.

Decaying corpse meditation *(kalebara bhāvanā)*

The Buddha once said, *Bhikkhus*: “If seeing a corpse thrown into the grave, which is one, two, or three days dead, swollen, bloated, bluish-black, full of filth; one should draw this conclusion regarding one’s own body: My body too has this nature, has this destiny, and cannot escape it!”

If one should see a corpse thrown to the burial ground, gnawed and partly eaten by crows, hawks, vultures, dogs or jackals, and creeping with all kinds of worms and maggots; one should draw this conclusion regarding one’s own body: This body too has this nature, will also become exactly like that, and cannot ever escape it!

If one should see a chain of bones, flesh hanging from it, splattered with blood, held together by the sinews, or bones disconnected and scattered in all directions: here a hand-bone, there a foot-bone, here the pelvis, the spine, the skull, or bones, now bleached, pale white and looking like sea-shells, or black rotting bones finally crumbling into dust. One should think: This body too has this nature, has this destiny, and it cannot escape it. (Source: MN 10, DN 22).

Chapter IX

Universal Benevolence / Compassion

Cultivation of Universal Benevolence/Compassion:

- a. Universal benevolence (*mettā*).
- b. Compassion (*karunā*).

Goodwill has an area dimension called universal benevolence (*mettā*) and a depth dimension called Compassion (*karunā*).

Universal benevolence (*mettā*) is a selfless longing for the weal and welfare of all beings. It is not a love for one individual or even love for members of one's family. It is not even patriotism or love for all humanity. It is a longing for the weal and welfare of all beings without exception, even including animals, and even unknown beings in other worlds. Universal benevolence is losing one's self-interest in the interest in all beings, with no exceptions. It is like a river flowing into the ocean and losing its identity by merging into the waters of the ocean. In the same way, all self-interest is lost in the interest in all beings. No distinction is made between oneself and others. One's interest is extending to all beings without exception. One's interest, which was originally narrow, by being concerned only with oneself, is now extended and expanded to include all beings

without exception. Universal benevolence is a broadened mind state that has no limits.

Compassion (*karunā*)

This is the depth dimension, which is concerned about how deeply one is interested in the welfare of all beings. It is to be greatly interested in the welfare of all beings without making any distinction between oneself and others. Other's welfare is as important as one's own, just as the mother is concerned about the welfare of one's own child. Sympathy (*karunā*) can also be described as being in tune with the sorrows and the happiness of others, as if it were one's own. It may also be regarded as a state where one's heart vibrates in sympathy or in unison with that of others, and is therefore able to understand not only the others' point of view, but also their feelings.

Compassion can be directed at five levels of discomfort (*dukkha*):

1. Sympathy for those who have lost what they possessed (persons -- through death; things -- through theft; natural disasters, etc.) and for those who are unable to get what they want due to inability.
2. Sympathy for those who have lost their self-identity (loss of position in society, suffering from inferiority complex, ego challenged, etc.).
3. Sympathy for beings in the human world (in prisons, hospitals, refugee camps, and those subject to starvation, suppression, etc.).

4. Sympathy for other less privileged beings (animals, ghosts, beings in hells) that you may not even know about.
5. Sympathy for those who are worrying or repenting for their misdeeds.

Compassion can be directed at five levels of comfort (*sukha*)

1. Sympathetic joy for those who have gained many things they wished for
2. Sympathetic joy for those who have gained their self-identity
3. Sympathetic joy for more privileged beings in the human world who are comfortable and happy
4. Sympathetic joy for more privileged beings in heavens
5. Sympathetic joy for those who are enjoying the freedom from guilt and the benefits of being good and pure in mind

Compassion is not merely the sympathy for others sorrow, but also the congratulation for others happiness.

Cultivation of universal benevolence (*mettā*):

Remember we are all self-centered at the start. So we begin with the selfish narrow-minded thinking we are born with, wishing oneself one's own welfare. We begin to make good wishes towards one-self. Then we gradually expand and spread out these self-centered wishes to include others in it. This way we broaden our mind. It is important to think these

thoughts with feeling instead of merely verbalizing. Because feelings accompany mental images, it is important to visualize the field we spread the compassion to. So let us think as follows:

Step I

May I be well, comfortable, peaceful and happy: free from lust, free from hatred, free from selfishness, free from worries, free from fears; and may I maintain myself dispassionate, compassionate, happy and tranquil.

Step II

Just as I should be well, peaceful and happy, may all beings in this room be well, comfortable, peaceful and happy; others are as important as myself, and therefore I do not make any distinction between myself, and others.

May all beings in this room: whether human or non-human, small or large, far or near, visible or invisible, known or unknown; be free from passion, free from hatred, free from confusion, free from worries, free from fears, and may they all maintain themselves: dispassionate, compassionate, happy and tranquil.

Step III

Keep repeating this same formula gradually extending these good wishes outwards to all beings in ever expanding concentric circles, moving from the room to the city, to the province, to the country, to the continent, to the earth, and to the whole universe, and even beyond to all spheres of existence,

known and unknown, without limits, without bounds, up to infinity, without excluding anyone.

Step IV

Remain in that final stage of expanded universal benevolence towards all beings without exception, as long as possible.

Cultivation of compassion (*karunā*):

Think of all those beings that suffer, here in the human world, and even in the world of ghosts and hells. Try to put yourself in their shoes and begin to feel the suffering as if it were your own. Wish that these beings be free from all suffering as soon as possible. Wish they should begin to experience happiness, as quickly as possible.

Wish that they be free from passion, free from hatred, free from confusion, free from worries, and free from fears. May they all be dispassionate, compassionate, tranquil and happy.

Now think of all beings in pleasant conditions here in this human world as well as outside, in the heavenly worlds of pleasure, the peaceful worlds of form, and the peaceful worlds empty of forms. Try to imagine how happy and peaceful they are and feel happy about their happiness. Wish that their happiness lasted long. Wish that they be free from passion, free from hatred, free from confusion, free from worries, free from fears, and may they all be dispassionate, compassionate, happy and tranquil.

Cultivation of selfless happiness (*muditā*):

With the cultivation of compassion and sympathy, self-consciousness expands beyond limits, to become an individual free universal consciousness. Individual self-consciousness has been transformed into a Universal Consciousness. Because all unhappiness is self-centered, this loss of self-consciousness brings all unhappiness to an end. What is left then is the experience of Selfless Happiness (*muditā*).

Try to remain in this selfless state of happiness as long as possible, without self-consciousness.

Note: This experience of selfless happiness is the result of practicing dispassion and compassion. It cannot come about independent of the former states.

Cultivation of tranquility (*samādhi*):

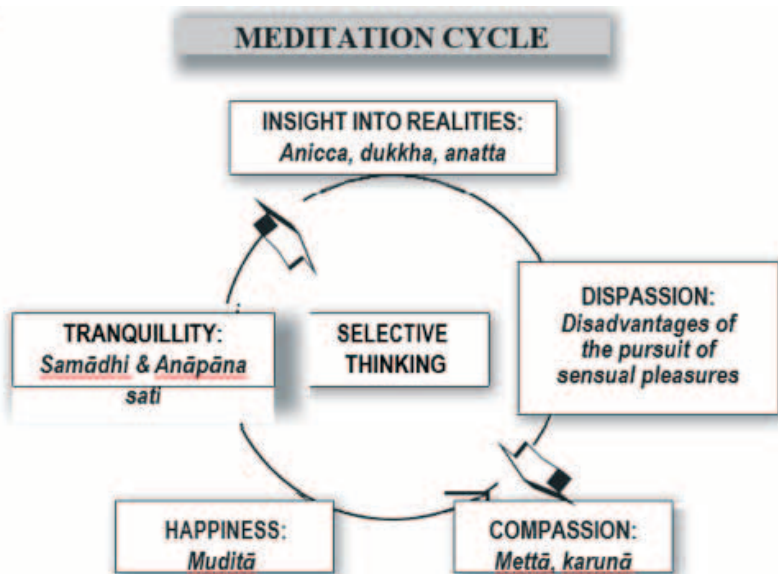
The happiness of selflessness is not an emotional excitement. It is a state of tranquility. Try to maintain this tranquility or stillness of mind as long as you can.

Observe the relaxation of the body and the calmness of the breathing and the pleasant comfortable feeling of relaxation. Maintain the calmness by focusing on the comfortable feeling of relaxation. Notice that when happiness is experienced within, attention stays within, without running to external objects. When the attention is focused within, the mind remains undisturbed without searching for happiness in the world outside or external circumstances. This Systematic Introspection (*satipatthāna*) is often understood today as mindfulness. This healthy introspection (*sati+upatthāna*) should be distinguished from the so-called morbid introspection, which is not introspection

at all but an emotional disturbance. One should learn to remain in this healthy, relaxed, tranquil, peaceful state as long as possible.

Tranquility is produced by relaxation of the body and experiencing the comfortable feeling of relaxation. It is a resting of the mind, due to the absence of emotional disturbances. It is not concentration of the mind but a stillness of the mind, due to the absence of emotional disturbances.

The five good thoughts to be cultivated are actually five stages in the process of transformation of the mind. In other words, they are five parts of a cycle of change, which ultimately becomes five aspects of the same final state of mind.



In-sight – Gaining the Harmonious Perspective.

Dispassion – The harmonious perspective leads to the giving up of self-centered desires.

Compassion – When selfishness disappears, one is able to take an interest in the welfare of others.

Happiness – When self-absorption and worry about oneself is no more, there is the experience of happiness.

Tranquility – The experience of selfless happiness is not an excitement, but a state of tranquility.

In-sight – Tranquility results in the mind settling within, when true introspection becomes possible. Introspection leads to the experiencing of experience, instead of existence, which is a paradigm shift. This results in Awakening from the “dream of existence”. This is liberation or emancipation (*vimutti*) from the emotional cause and existential suffering.

If complete insight has not been attained, the Harmonious Cycle begins again.

Harmonious mental equilibrium

(samma samādhi)

This is homeostasis, or the return to the original purity and tranquility of mind, which has been lost due to the emotional reaction to stimulation of the senses in the form attraction and repulsion. This state of equilibrium consists of five parts:

1. Inference (*vitakka*)
2. Inquiry (*vicāra*)
3. Contentment of mind (*piti*)

4. Comfort of body (*sukha*)
5. Unity of mind (*ekaggatā*).

Introversion of attention and introspection (*sati+sampajañña*)

Awareness of in and out breathing (*ānapāna sati*)

1. In this case a follower having gone into a forest, a foot a tree, or empty shelter, sits cross-legged with back erect.
2. Having withdrawn attention from external surroundings, he focuses his attention within. (observing the body, feeling, mood, and thoughts).
3. Fully aware, he breathes in; and fully aware, he breathes out.
4. When breathing in long, he is aware of “breathing in long”; when breathing out long, he is aware of “breathing out long”.
5. When breathing in short, he is aware of “breathing in short”; when breathing out short, he is aware of “breathing out short”.
6. Being aware of the entire body he breathes in.
7. Being aware of the entire body he breathes out.
8. Relaxing the bodily activity he breathes in.

9. Relaxing the bodily activity he breathes out.
 - a. Experiencing happiness he breathes in.
 - b. Experiencing happiness he breathes out.
 - c. Experiencing comfort he breathes in.
 - d. Experiencing comfort he breathes out.
 - e. Experiencing stillness he breathes in.
 - f. Experiencing stillness he breathes out.

The establishment of fourfold attention *(cattāro satipatthāna)*

1. Mentally observing the entire **body** (*kāya anupassanā*)
2. Observing how the **body feels** (*vedanā anupassanā*)
3. Observing the **mood** (*citta anupassanā*)
4. Observing the **thoughts** (*dhamma anupassanā*)

Breathing meditation

1. Sit with your back erect.
2. Observe any tensions in the body and relax.
3. As your body relaxes, the attention will automatically go to the breathing.
4. Observe the nature of the breathing; is it long or short; obstructed or not?
5. Observe how you feel in the body, as you breathe in.
6. As you keep doing this, the body begins to relax.
7. Then you begin to experience the comfortable feeling of relaxation.
8. Then you begin to experience happiness.

9. Focus your attention on the happiness and comfort.
10. Don't be carried away by thoughts that arise in the mind.

Remain in that state of stillness, happiness and comfort as long as you can.

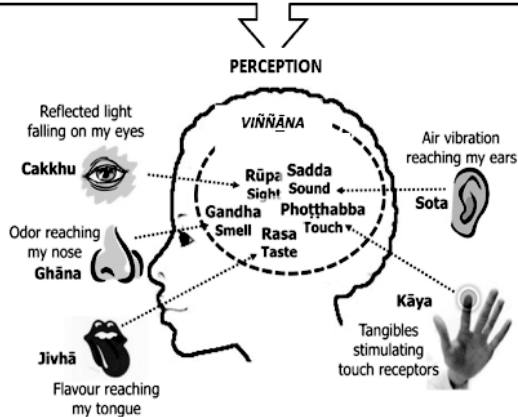
The benefits of this meditation

1. You will be free from worries.
2. You will be happy always.
3. You will make friends.
4. You can think more clearly.
5. You will be good at your work, whatever you do.

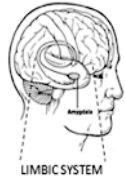
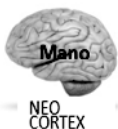
Appendix – Stage I

PERCEPTION, COGNITION, EMOTIONS & BEHAVIOUR

1. PERCEPTION (VIÑÑĀNA): Eye perception (*cakku viññāna*); Ear perception (*sota viññāna*); Nose perception (*ghāna viññāna*); Tongue perception (*jivha viññāna*); Body perception (*kāya viññāna*)



2. COGNITION (MANO VIÑÑĀNA):
 Interpretation of percepts / circumstances ->
 THINKING -> CONCEPTION -> CONSCIOUSNESS



3. EMOTIONAL STATUS (CITTA)

CALM (normal state)

EXCITED (desire, anger, fear)

4. CETANA (decision to act)

6. REACTION
(*akusala kamma*)

5. RESPONSE
(*kusala kamma*)

8. BAD CONSEQUENCES
(*kusala vipāka*)

7. GOOD CONSEQUENCES
(*akusala vipāka*)

BUDDHA

(Adapted from an article by the author)

The term “BUDDHA,” is associated today with a historical person who lived more than 25 centuries ago in India, by the name of Siddhartha Gotama. Some call him “Sakyamuni Buddha.” “BUDDHA,” however, was not his name, but his title, which means, the one who is “AWAKE.”

What this article attempts to discuss is not the life history of the person called Buddha, but the meaning of the term “BUDDHA.” Many books have been written about the life of the Buddha, but there is no book so far that discusses adequately what the term Buddha means. Our aim is not to discuss “who” the Buddha was, but “what” a Buddha is. Just as “God” as a person who created the universe may or may not be real, but the “concept God” is a real one that exists in the minds of some people. In the same way, though the historical Buddha has been authenticated or not, the “concept BUDDHA” is a real one. It is this “concept” that we are concerned about here. Just as the concept God is important to some people, the concept BUDDHA is important to Buddhists. In fact, the concept BUDDHA is the Buddhist parallel of the concept God. The concept Buddha stands in place of the concept God, in the minds of Buddhists. There are also many similarities between these two concepts. For example, the Buddhists think of the Buddha as super human, all knowing, all compassionate, and all mighty, although he is not seen as the supernatural creator of the world, who lives in heaven. Although some critics, in their ignorance, see this as the deification of a human being, the Buddhists see “Buddha” as the ultimate stage in the evolution

of a human being. Such a supernormal state could be called “superhuman” but not “supernatural.”

In order to understand this fully, it is necessary to understand that there are two ways of thinking: Theistic and Humanistic. Theistic thinking is of two kinds: Polytheistic and Monotheistic. Polytheists believe in several supernatural beings called gods who control the world. Monotheists believe only in a single God who created the world and runs the world. Humanists do not believe in supernatural beings. They are mainly concerned about human beings and their problems, as well as the human potentials, and even how the human beings can transcend all human weaknesses and become superhuman. Human beings are understood to be a class of animals who are more evolved than the other animals. Buddha was a human being who transcended the common animalistic nature and became Superhuman. This rising above the common animalistic human nature into a totally Superhuman State was achieved by Awakening from the dream of existence. Thus awakened, the Buddha ceased to be an existing being any more. The Buddha was such an Awakened Superhuman Nonbeing who had transcended existence.

Buddhists believe that the human being can rise to a Superhuman level and thus solve the **common problem of existence** they all have to face in life. Religion for the Buddhist is the way human beings attempt to solve the problem of existence. The problem of existence is that every thing that exists is transitory. They come and go. People tend to become attached to these transitory things and when they depart they become unhappy. Pains too come and go. The presence of pain is painful though its departure is pleasant. True happiness is to keep the mind undisturbed by the changing vicissitudes of life. While theistic

religions seek the Supernatural power of the Supernatural gods to solve their natural problems, the Humanistic Buddhists seek the natural wisdom of the Buddha to solve their problems.

It is the failure to understand this distinction between the person Buddha and the concept BUDDHA that has led to the mistaken notion among some critics that the Buddhists have deified a human being named Buddha, just as, they say, the Christians have deified the man Jesus. Therefore, it is very important to emphasise this distinction between a Buddha and God. In fact, we might compare this distinction to the distinction that Christians make between the man Jesus and the concept CHRIST as the Son of God, or Logos. We might also compare it to the distinction that Hindus make between Krishna as a human being and the concept Krishna as an incarnation of Vishnu, the God of the Hindus. In fact, the Hindus consider even the Buddha as an incarnation of Vishnu. Of course, this Hindu concept of Buddha and the Buddhist concept of Buddha are quite different. This Hindu concept can, however, be called a deification of the Buddha, because the Buddha is equated to the Hindu God. Some critics say that there are differences in the concept Buddha even among the different schools of Buddhism. They say that the Mahayana Buddhists have deified the Buddha, while the Theravada Buddhists regard the Buddha as a human being. This too is a mistaken view of writers, because Theravada Buddhists don't regard the Buddha as an ordinary human being. This mistake will become clear from the foregoing discussion.

What we are interested in presenting in this book is the concept of BUDDHA as it is found in the Pali Nikaya, writings preserved by the Theravada Buddhists, which, all scholars agree, contain the earliest teachings of the Buddha. We shall

call these early Buddhist teachings, Proto-Buddhism, because it is the prototype from which all modern schools of Buddhism arose. Of course, the concept of Buddha was in existence in India even before the historical Buddha Gotama. Gotama as a person only matched this concept and was therefore entitled BUDDHA. In time, Gotama also defined this concept, elaborated on it and identified himself with it.

The best way to introduce this concept is through the following dialogue in the Anguttara Nikaya (G.S. 11 43 - 45):

Once a Brahmin by the name of Dona, noticed the very extraordinary footprints of Gotama, the Buddha, and fascinated by his serene bearing, determined that he could not be a human being, and questioned Gotama as follows:

“Is your worship a *deva* (god)?”

“No indeed, Brahmin. I am not a *deva*.”

“Is your worship a *gandhabba* (angel)?”

“No indeed, Brahmin, I am not a *gandhabba*.”

“Is your worship a *yakka* (devil)?”

“No indeed, Brahmin, I am not a *yakka*.”

“Then is your worship a human being?”

“No indeed, Brahmin, I am not a human being.”

“What then, pray, is your worship?”

“Brahmin, those properties whereby, if they were present in me, I would become a *deva*, or *gandhabba*, or *yakka*, or human being, I have rooted them out, never to grow again, just as in a palm tree stump. Like a red, blue or white lotus, though born in the water, grown up in the water, rises above the water and stands unsoiled by the water; just so Brahmin, though born in the world: grown

up in the world, having transcended the world, I abide unsoiled by the world.

It should be emphasized at this point that a Buddha is not a human being any more. Nor is he a supernatural being such as a “god.”

Human beings are understood to be a class of animals who are more evolved than the other animals. Buddha is a human being who has transcended the common animalistic human nature and become Superhuman. This rising above the common human level, or transcendence is called becoming a Buddha, or awakening from the dream of existence. The Buddha is such an awakened Super human being.

Buddhists believe that the human being can rise to a Super-human level and thus solve the problems they have to face in life. Religion for the Buddhist is the way human beings attempt to solve the problem of existence. The problem of life is that every thing in life is transitory. They come and go. People tend to become attached to these transitory things and when they cease to be, they cry and lament and become unhappy. Pains too, however, come and go. Their presence is painful though their departure is pleasant. True happiness is to keep the mind undisturbed by the changing vicissitudes of life.

While theistic religions seek the supernatural power of the supernatural gods to solve their problems, the Humanistic Buddhists seek the natural wisdom of the natural Buddha to solve their problems.

It interesting to refer to another enlightening quote from the Mulapariyaya Sutta in the Majjima Nikaya, where the Buddha says: “These Brahmins claim that they are the true children of Brahma born out of his mouth. But every Brahmin

knows that they have come out of their mother's womb. If my disciples, on the other hand, claim that they are the true children of Brahma born of his mouth, they are saying something that is true, because I am Brahma become, and these are my children born of my mouth."

This is why the Buddha may be called "God" with the capital "G," though not the supernatural, almighty, Creator of the world. God then is the state of perfection that man conceives and also realizes through the practice of religion.

Buddha was born as a human being but he transcended all human weaknesses, biological impulses and even divine failings and became perfect. He has risen even above the gods. He became the only person who is fit to be called "God" with the capital "G". This is not the deification of a human being by his faithful devotees. This is the evolution of a human being by transcending all human weaknesses. This is the definition of the concept of BUDDHA in Buddhism.

Here we have an interesting quotation again from the *Samyutta Nikaya* (K.S. 1 93).

Once King Pasenadi of Kosala visited the Buddha and questioned him thus:

"Does master Gotama also make no claim to the unsurpassable and harmonious awakening (*Anuttara sammā sambodhi*)?"

"If there be anyone, sire, to whom such awakening, might rightly be attributed, it is me. **I verily, sire, have attained to that unsurpassable harmonious awakening.**"

The significance of this concept of BUDDHA to the Buddhist and to all humanity is that as the Buddhists believe, **it**

is possible for a human being to reach a state of perfection, through human endeavour, without the help of any supernatural agency.

This may look impossible or absurd to non-Buddhists brought up in a Monotheistic tradition, but from a Buddhist point of view, it is not more absurd than believing that such a perfect being exists out there in heaven, invisible and unknown to imperfect human beings, who have been created by this perfect being, and who are helplessly under the mercy of this perfect Creator who punishes and rewards the imperfect human beings he himself created according to his own whims. A Buddhist by definition, however, is one who could believe in this concept of BUDDHA, as the ultimate point in the evolution of the suffering human beings.

The advantage of being such a believing Buddhist is that such a Buddhist will gain the **great hope** that **his problems will be solved** by **transcending his human weaknesses**, by **following a human technique** shown by the Buddha. **Such a Buddhist will begin to make the effort to grow**, evolve and develop his mind, instead of praying and waiting until a supernatural God thinks it fit to bestow his grace upon him, either by forgiving his sins or by purifying him through his supernatural powers.

Believing in the possibility of human perfection, through human effort, is the humanistic approach to perfection as opposed to the theistic approach, through dependence on a supernatural power. Therefore, Buddhism may be called a humanistic religion as contrary to theistic religions. Therefore **Buddhists are not beyond the thresh-hold of HOPE**

If Buddhism and the concept of BUDDHA can be understood this way, the modern humanistic mind can appreciate the important message that the historical Buddha brought to the world.

In introducing the concept of Buddha, who is also called *Tathāgata* (the Transcendent One), the uniqueness of the Buddha and his benefit to the world is expressed in the following passage from the *Anguttara Nikāya* (G.S. I 14 - 15):

“There is one person whose birth into the world is for the welfare of many folk, for the happiness of many folk; who is born out of compassion for the world, for the profit, welfare and happiness of devas and mankind.

Who is that one person? It is the *Tathāgata*, the Perfect One; the Harmoniously Awakened One.

The manifestation of one person is hard to be found in the world; of which person? Of the *Tathāgata*, the Perfect One, the Harmoniously Awakened One.

One person born into the world is an extraordinary man, which person? The *Tathāgata*, the Perfect One, the Harmoniously Awakened One.

The death of one person is to be regretted by many folk; of which person? The *Tathāgata*, the Perfect One, the Harmoniously Awakened One.

There is one person born into the world who is unique, without peer, without counterpart, incomparable, unequalled, matchless, unrivalled, best of bipeds is he. Who is that one person? It is the *Tathagatha* (the transcendent One) the Perfect One, The Harmoniously Awake One.

The manifestation of one person is the manifestation of a mighty eye, a mighty light, a mighty radiance, of six things unsurpassed. It is the realization of the fourfold analysis, the penetration of various data, the diversity of data. It is the realization of the fruits of Comprehension and freedom, the realization of the fruits of stream winning, of once returning, of not-returning, of emancipation (*Arahat*), Of which person? Of a *Tathagatha*, a Perfect one, a o more

The great importance of a Buddha as the light of the world is expressed as follows (K. S. V 374):

So long as the moon and sun arise in the world, so long is there no shining forth of light, of great radiance, then is there gloom and darkness, no telling whether it is night or day, no telling of months or half months, no telling of seasons of the year.

But when the moon and sun shine in the world, then there is the shining forth of great light, of great radiance. Then there is no more gloom and darkness, no more murk of gloom and darkness, one can tell whether it is night or day, one can tell the months and the half months and the seasons of the year.

Just as long as a *Tathagatha* arises not in the world even so there is no shining forth of light, of great radiance, then is there gloom and darkness, murk of gloom and darkness then is there no proclamation of The Fourfold Supernormal Reality. No teaching, no setting forth. No establishing, no opening up, no analysing, and making things plain.

But as soon as a *Tathāgata* arises in the world, then is there a shining forth of great light, of great radiance. Then is there no more gloom and darkness. no more murk of gloom and darkness; then is there proclamation of the Four-fold

Supernormal Reality, then is there teaching, setting forth, establishing, opening up, analysing and making things plain.

The Buddha is understood to be the greatest being beyond all gods, according to the following passage (G.S. II 39):

“As compared with creatures, whether footless, bipeds, quadrupeds, or those with many feet, with form or void of form, with sense or void of sense or indeterminate in sense, a *Tathagata*, a Perfect One, a Harmoniously Awakened One is reckoned best of them. They who appreciate the Buddha appreciate the best: of those who appreciate the best the result is best.”

The concept of BUDDHA though it was elaborated in detail by Gotama, was not an exclusively Buddhist concept. Several leaders in India at the time of Gotama claimed to omniscience and to possess supernormal psychic powers. A person named Vaccagotta who had met several such acclaimed omniscient men, came to Gotama and questioned him regarding his claim as follows (M II 159 160):

“Your Worship, I have heard it said that the saint Gotama is all knowing, all seeing, he claims all-embracing knowledge and vision, saying, ‘whether I am walking or standing still or asleep or awake, knowledge and vision is permanently and continuously before me.’ Your Worship, those who speak thus ... are they speaking of the Lord in accordance with what has been said or are they misrepresenting your Worship with what is not fact....”

“Vaccha, those who speak thus are not speaking of me in accordance with what has been said by me. But they are misrepresenting me with what is untrue, not fact.”

“Expounding in what way, your Worship, would we be speaking in accordance with what has been said by your worship?”

“Vaccha, expounding, “The saint Gotama is a threefold knowledge man.” You would be one who speaks, in accordance with what has been said by me.”

“For I Vaccha, whenever I please, recollect numerous former lives, that is to say, one, two, three, four, five, then, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, hundred, thousand, hundred thousand lives and many an eon of contraction and expansion. Thus I remember numerous former lives in all their modes and details.”

“And I Vaccha, whenever I please, with the purified divine vision surpassing that of men, see beings as they are deceasing and uprising. I see beings who are mean or excellent, comely or ugly, well-going or ill-going uprising accordingly as a consequence of their deeds.”

“And I Vaccha, by the Cessation of influences (instinctual impulses) have realised here and now, by my own super-knowledge, the freedom of mind and the freedom through penetration which is free understanding that are free from natural tendencies (instinctual impulses.”

Here we find that the Buddha does not claim omniscience or all embracing knowledge and vision at all times, but speaks about a specific ability to know the past and the future not only one’s own, but also that of others.

In other words, he could see the cycle of birth and death that runs governed by the power of karma. It is important to note here that his idea of karma and rebirth is not borrowed from others but is based on his own experience.

In describing the special attainment of the Buddha the following passage from the Anguttara Nikaya says:

“Monks, the world is fully comprehended by a *Tathāgata*. From the world a *Tathāgata* is freed. Monks, the continuous arising of the world is fully comprehended by a *Tathāgata*: the continuous arising of the world has been terminated by a *Tathāgata*. The cessation of the world is fully comprehended by a *Tathāgata*: the cessation of the world has been actualized by a *Tathāgata*. Monks, the practice leading to the cessation of the world is fully comprehended by a *Tathāgata*: the practice leading to the cessation of the world has been completed by a *Tathagata*.

“Monks, whatsoever in the whole world, with the world of Maras, Brahmas, together with the host of recluses and brahmins, of devas and mankind, is seen, heard, sensed, cognised, attained, searched into, pondered over by the mind, - all that is fully comprehended by a *Tathāgata*.”

“Monks, in the entire world, with the world of Devas, of Maras, of Brahmas... of devas and mankind, a *Tathāgata* is conqueror, unconquered, seer of what so ever there is to see, the wielder of power.” (G.S. II 25)

The supremacy of the Buddha over all other beings is indicated in the following passage from the *Anguttara Nikaya* (G.S. 11 36):

“Monks, the lion, king of the beasts, at eventide comes from his lair, he stretches himself. Having done so, he surveys the four quarters in all directions. Having done that, he utters thrice his lions roar. Thrice, having uttered his lion’s roar he sallies forth in search of prey.”

“Now monks, whatsoever brute creatures hear the sound of the roaring of the lion, king of the beasts for the most part they are afraid: they fall to quaking and trembling... Just so monks, when a *Tathāgata* arises in the world, a Perfect One, a Harmoniously Awakened One, endowed with consciousness and response, attained to the good, penetrated the world, unsurpassable trainer of persons, teacher of devas and men, awakened and blessed, He teaches Dhamma and: such is personality, such is the origin of personality, such is the ending of personality, such the practice, leading to the ending of personality.

“Then monks, whatsoever devas there be, long lived, beautiful and happy, for a long time established in lofty mansions, they too on hearing the Dhamma, teaching of the *Tathāgata*, are afraid mostly; they fall to quaking and trembling, saying, “It seems sirs, that we who thought ourselves permanent are after all impermanent, that we who thought our-selves stable are after all unstable, that we, who thought ourselves lasting, are after all not lasting. So it seems, sirs, that we are impermanent, unstable, not lasting, being oppressed by a supposed personality.” Thus potent, monks, is the *Tathagata*, over Devas and mankind, of such mighty power and majesty is he.”

These ideas expressed in the foregoing quotations from the *Nikāyas* are further elaborated in the *Suttas*. This shows that the concept of BUDDHA in Early Buddhism was the concept of a special Superhuman being who has transcended all human weaknesses and gained a perfection surpassing even divine beings. Devas are seen in Buddhism God not only as imperfect beings but also as mortal beings. Only the Buddha transcends death in the attainment of Nibbāna.

The normal human mind is **influenced**, by natural forces in the environment. This **can be prevented** by a special psychological technique discovered by the Buddha, which is **The Supernormal Eightfold Way**. There are four natural influences that affect the normal human mind, which originating in the environment. They are: (1) the urge to lust for sensual pleasure (*kāma āsava*), (2) the urge to exist (*bhava āsava*), (3) the urge to form views (*ditthi āsava*), and (4) the urge to remain unconscious (*avijjā āsava*).

Concept of BUDDHA

The practice of Buddhism is based on the concept of BUDDHA, which when properly comprehended brings about not only **self confidence**, but also the desire to evolve and transcend all human weaknesses through **self reliance and the urge to evolve, following** the Buddha. Buddhism is a truly humanistic religion that defines religion as the psychological process of evolution of the human consciousness to a state of perfection called **Buddha**. The Person who discovered that state of Perfection was Siddhartha Gothama. The term “**Buddha**” means **the one who is Awake**. It is very important to understand this concept of BUDDHA, which gives **hope** to mankind. The **Hope** it gives is that every human being has the power to transcend all human weaknesses and reach the highest state of perfection called **Buddha** and thus gain freedom from all sufferings of life.. According to the Nikayas, there have been numerous BUDDHAS before Gotama and there will be numerous BUDDHAS after him.

The teaching of Gothama the Buddha is nothing but an explanation of how we too can become Buddhas like him and bring all suffering to an end. All human problems could be solved only through this process of human evolution.

The concept of BUDDHA is the ideal of perfection that all human beings look up to, while Buddhism shows how to realize, through human effort here and now. The historical Buddha Gothama testified to this fact through his own experience and the experience of many of his successful disciples.

Dvedhā vitakka Sutta:
Two kinds of thoughts

(MN Vol. I: 153)

-A new translation -

Thus have I heard:

Once, the Blessed One was sojourning in Savatthi, at the Jetavanārāma, the Anāthapindika's Monastery. While there, the Blessed One addressed the Bhikkhus thus:

“Oh Bhikkhus”!

“Yes Lord”. They replied.

Then the Blessed One said: “Before my awakening, Bhikkhus, while I was still an unawake Bodhisatta, it occurred to me: “Suppose I distinguish between good thoughts and bad thoughts.” So I separated passionate, angry, and violent thoughts; from dispassionate, kind, and peaceful thoughts”.

When I dwelt thus watchful, alert, and vigilant, a passionate thought arose in me. Then I recognized: “A passionate thought has arisen in me, this can lead to my own harm, to others harm and to the harm of both. It obstructs intelligence, favors destructiveness, and leads me away from Nibbana. When I considered: “this lead to my own harm”, it subsided in me. When I considered, these lead to others harm, it subsided in me. When I considered, this leads to the harm of both, it subsided in me. When I considered, “these thoughts obstruct intelligence, favor destructiveness, and leads me away from Nibbana,” they subsided in me. Every passionate thought that arose in me, I did not accept it, I rejected it, and I eliminated it.

Similarly, when an angry thought arose in me, I did not accept it, I rejected it, and I eliminated it.

When a cruel thought arose in me, I did not accept it, I rejected it, and I eliminated it.

“Bhikkhus, whatever a Bhikkhu frequently thinks and ponders over, the mind will be inclined towards it. If he frequently thinks and ponders over passionate thoughts, he has abandoned dispassion, and the mind is inclined more towards passionate thoughts. Similarly, if he frequently thinks and ponders over angry thoughts, he has abandoned kindness, and the mind is inclined more towards anger. Or if he frequently thinks and ponders over cruel thoughts, he has abandoned peacefulness, and his mind becomes inclined more towards thoughts of cruelty.

This way I saw the danger, futility and confusion in unwholesome mental states, and I saw the advantage of cultivating wholesome mental states.

As I dwelt thus: watchful, alert, and vigilant, a thought of renunciation a rose in me. Then I recognized, this thought of renunciation has risen in me. This does not lead me to my own harm, to others harm, or to the harm of both. It promotes intelligence, it supports constructiveness, and it leads me to Nibbana. If I think and ponder over this thought for one night, or for one day, or even for a night and a day, I see no danger. Excessive thinking and pondering, however, might tire my body, and when my body is tired, the mind becomes tired, when the mind is tired, it is far from tranquility. So I steadied my mind internally, quietened it, brought it to a state of tranquility and stillness. Why is that? In order to prevent the mind from being disturbed.

As I dwelt thus, watchful, alert, and vigilant, a thought of kindness arose in me. Then I recognized, this thought of kindness has risen in me. This does not lead me to my own harm, to others harm, or to the harm of both. It promotes intelligence, it supports constructiveness, and it leads me to Nibbana. If I think and ponder over this thought for one night, or for one day, or even for a night and a day, I see no danger. Excessive thinking and pondering, however, might tire my body, and when my body is tired, the mind becomes tired, when the mind is tired, it is far from tranquility. So I steadied my mind internally, quietened it, brought it to a state of tranquility and stillness. Why is that? In order to prevent the mind from being disturbed.

As I dwelt thus, watchful, alert, and vigilant, a thought of peacefulness arose in me. Then I recognized, this thought of peacefulness has arisen in me. This does not lead to my own harm, to others harm, or to the harm of both. It promotes intelligence, it supports constructiveness, and it leads me to Nibbana. If I think and ponder over these thoughts for one night, or for one day, or even for a night and a day, I see no danger. Excessive thinking and pondering, however, might tire my body, and when the body is tired, the mind becomes tired, and when the mind is tired, it is far from tranquility. So I steadied my mind internally, quietened it, brought it to a state of tranquility and stillness. Why is that? In order to prevent my mind, from being disturbed.

“Bhikkhus, whatever a Bhikkhu frequently thinks and ponders over, the mind will become inclined towards it. If he frequently thinks and ponders over thoughts of renunciation, he has abandoned passion, and his mind is inclined towards thoughts of renunciation. If he frequently thinks and ponders

over thoughts of kindness or of peacefulness, he has abandon anger and cruelty, and his mind inclines towards kind and peaceful thoughts.

Having gone thus far, I had only to be aware that those good thoughts were going on in my mind. I realized my vigilant practice has progressed, my unremitting introspective attention was established in me, my body was relaxed and comfortable, and my mind was happy, tranquil, and unified.

In this way, withdrawn from passionate thoughts, withdrawn from evil thoughts, I entered upon the first Jhana with observation and inference, experiencing joy and comfort based on mental equilibrium ...ultimately I came to realize that: birth is ended, lived is the holy life, done is what has to be done, and no more is the continuity of existence.

“So Bhikkhus, the safe and good path to be travelled joyfully has been reopened by me, the wrong path has been closed off. What a teacher who seeks your welfare, and has compassion for you can do, that I have done for you, bhikkhus. There are these roots of trees, and these empty huts. Bhikkhus meditate, do not delay, or else you will regret it later. This is my advice to you”.

Thus was the Blessed One’s utterance. The Bhikkhus were delighted and inspired by what the Blessed One said.

Vitakka santhāna sutta:
Technique of calming thoughts

(MN Volume I: 152)

-A new translation -

The disciple who is engaged in the development of the superior disposition should cultivate five mental strategies at the appropriate times.

If an image arises in a disciple's mind, which, as he reflects on it, arouses evil and unworthy thoughts associated with lust, hate and confusion, then an image contrary to this image, which is worthy, must be reflected on. When this is done, those evil and unworthy thoughts wane and cease. Just as a skillful carpenter or his-assistant, removes an old wooden peg by placing a new wooden peg and hammering on it, so the disciple removes a bad mental image by substituting a good mental image.

When this is done, if the evil and unworthy thoughts still continue to arise, then one should consider the evil consequences of these evil thoughts thus: "These thoughts are unworthy; these thoughts are incorrect; these thoughts lead to painful consequences". When this is done, those evil unworthy thoughts wane and cease. Just as if there is a woman, man or child who is clean and cleanly dressed, and someone hangs on his or her neck the carcass of a snake, dog, or human, he or she would be horrified, humiliated or disgusted, even so when one considers the evil consequences of evil thoughts, they wane and cease.

When this is done, if the evil and unworthy thoughts still continue to arise, then one should stop paying attention to these thoughts and stop reflecting on them. When this is done, those evil unworthy thoughts wane and cease. Just as a man with eyes who does not want to see something that comes within the range of his vision would shut his eyes or looks aside, even so one should shut one's mind to these evil thoughts by not paying attention to them, and ignoring them.

When this is done, if the evil unworthy thought still arise, then one should focus on relaxation and calmness, calming down the activity of thought. When this is done, those evil unworthy thoughts wane and cease. Just as a man who is running begins to walk slowly, or a man who is walking slowly, begins to stop and stand, or a man who is standing sits down, or a man who is sitting lies down, thus changing from a more tiresome position to a less tiresome, or more restful or more relaxed position, even so one focuses on relaxation and calmness and rests the mind.

When this is done, if the evil unworthy thoughts still arise, one should relax the clenched teeth, relax the tongue pressed on the palate, and thus remove the thought associated with evil easily without exertion, by relaxing and calming the mind. Just as a strong man might hold a weak man by the head or the body and throw him out easily, without exerting himself, being fully relaxed and calm, even so the disciple relaxes the jaws and tongue and throws out the thought without exerting himself, by relaxing the body and calming the mind.

When this is done, those evil unworthy thoughts associated with lust, hate and confusion wane and cease. When they disappear, the mind stays within, rests within, becomes uniform, and enters equilibrium.

The disciple who achieves this is called “Master of Mind”. He thinks what he wants to think. He does not think what is unwanted. He has stopped the emotional urge, broken the fetters, removed egotism, and ended suffering.

REFUGE AND OBSERVANCE

Obeisance:

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā sambuddhassa
Obeisance to the Sublime, Emancipated, Harmoniously
Awakened One.

The Triple Refuge:

Buddhaṅ saranaṅ gaccāmi – I take refuge in the Buddha.
Dhammaṅ saranaṅ gaccāmi – I take refuge in the *Dhamma*.
Saṅhaṅ saranaṅ gaccāmi – I take refuge in the Saṅgha.

Dutiyampi Buddhaṅ saranaṅ gaccāmi – Secondly, I take
refuge in the Buddha. *Dutiyampi Dhammaṅ saranaṅ*
gaccami – Secondly, I take refuge in the *Dhamma*.
Dutiyampi Saṅhaṅ saranaṅ gaccami –Secondly, I take
refuge in the *Saṅgha*.

Tatiyampi- Buddhaṅ saranaṅ gaccami – Thirdly, I take
refuge in the Buddha. *Tatiyampi Dhammaṅ saranaṅ*
gaccami – Thirdly, I take refuge in the *Dhamma*. *Tatiyampi*
Saṅhaṅ saranaṅ gaccami – Thirdly, I take refuge in the
Saṅgha.

The Five Disciplinary Principles:

1. *Pānātipāta veramani sikkhāpadaṅ samādiyāmi*
I accept the disciplinary principle of avoiding disrespect
for life.
2. *Adinnādāna veramani sikkhāpadaṅ samādiyami*
I accept the disciplinary principle of avoiding stealing.

3. *Kāmesu miccācāra veramani sikkhāpadaṇ samādiyami*
I accept the disciplinary principle of avoiding sexual misconduct.
4. *Musāvāda veramani sikkhāpadaṇ samādiyami*
I accept the disciplinary principle of avoiding false speech.
5. *Surāmeraya majja pamādatthānā veramani sikkhāpadaṇ samādiyami*
I accept the disciplinary principle of avoiding intoxicants that lead to inebriation and abreaction.

The Eight Disciplinary Principles:

1. *Pānātipāta veramani sikkhāpadaṇ samādiyāmi*
I accept the disciplinary principle of avoiding disrespect for life.
2. *Adinnādāna veramani sikkhāpadaṇ samādiyami*
I accept the disciplinary principle of avoiding stealing.
3. *Kāmesu miccācāra veramani sikkhāpadaṇ samādiyami*
I accept the disciplinary principle of avoiding sexual misconduct.
4. *Musāvāda veramani sikkhāpadaṇ samādiyami*
I accept the disciplinary principle of avoiding false speech.
5. *Surāmeraya majja pamādatthānā veramani sikkhāpadaṇ samādiyami*
I accept the disciplinary principle of avoiding intoxicants that lead to inebriation and abreaction.

6. *Vikala bhojanā veramani sikkhāpadaṅ samādiyami*

I accept the disciplinary principle of avoiding untimely meals.

7. *Nacca, gita, vadita, visuka, dassana; mala, gandha, vilepana, dharana, mandana, vibhusanattana; veramani sikkhāpadaṅ samādiyami*

I accept the disciplinary principle of avoiding shows containing dancing, singing, music, or humor; and avoiding adornments such as garlands, perfumes, unguents, dresses, and ornaments.

8. *Uccā sayanā mahā sayanā veramani sikkhāpadaṅ samādiyami*

I accept the disciplinary principle of avoiding the use of elegant and luxurious furniture.

Vow for the day

Ajja imanca divasan uposatan uposami – 3.

During this day I will keep my mind focused within.

Vow for the night

Ajja imanca rattin upsatan uposami

During this night I will keep my mind focused within

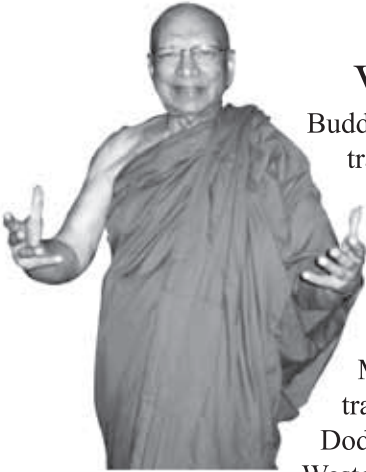
It is important to remember that by practicing these disciplinary principles we are attempting to live like the emancipated *Arahats* of old during the retreat. The purpose is to practice the divine life (*brahma cariya*), to the best of our ability now, so that if we cannot complete this purity during

this retreat, we would at least be able to continue it in our future lives, till we ultimately attain Nirvana.

No one can become a Buddha instantaneously. Even Prince Siddhatta had to struggle hard in his last life for six years to become a Buddha. It is important to note that his effort was not a mere six-year struggle, because this struggle was only his final struggle, after struggling for a countless millions of lives practicing the qualifying *paramitas*. This realization reminds us of the great importance of practicing this retreat. It is of significance to you not only for this life, but also for your entire painful journey through *saṅsara*.

This is why the Buddhists practice meditation retreats. They are not satisfied with blind imaginary hopes, about future everlasting heavens. They struggle hard to purify their minds here and now. If we do not do it now, there is no hope that we will be doing it in the future. Without it, we cannot hope for salvation. Rising above our normal life to a Divine Life (*Brahma cariya*) is the only way to progress.

About The Author



Venerable Mahathera M. Punnaji is a Buddhist monk from Sri Lanka of the Theravada tradition. Bhante is a disciple of His Holiness The Madihe Pannasiha, the late Maha Nayaka Thera of Vajirarama, Head of the Mihiripanne Dhammarakkhita Amarapura Nikaya. Bhante Punnaji was ordained at the Bhikkhu Training Centre, Maharagama, in his thirties. He obtained his training in meditation at the Island Hermitage, Dodanduwa. He studied modern science and Western medicine in Sri Lanka and he obtained two doctorates while in the United States, one is Western psychology and another in Western philosophy and comparative religion. Bhante Punnaji has made an in-depth research into the original teachings of the Buddha which he thinks is different from all the modern schools of Buddhism: Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana including Zen and Pure- land Buddhism. This research was not only academic but also experiential. Bhante also did research into the form of Buddhist Psychotherapy which he thinks is the best way to introduce Buddhism to the modern world. As Buddhism in its original form was not a mere religion of faith and worship but a psychological technique of growth and evolution of the human consciousness.

Bhante Punnaji presents Buddhism as a growth technique that transforms an individual's disposition by changing a person's sense of values and goal in life while it also overcomes the stress and strain of modern living. Bhante points out that the teaching of the Buddha is about a conscious return to the original equilibrium which the normal person loses in childhood due to unconscious emotional impulses. This return to the original equilibrium called NIBBANA is achieved through a psychological technique of conscious evolution of the human consciousness where the human being goes through a paradigm shift

and thereby transcends all human weakness and enters a superhuman “divine” state which all religions worship as “God”. This means that Buddhism is a humanistic philosophy that recognizes the unity in all religions and defines “religion”, “God” and “divinity” from a humanistic point of view. This also means that the Buddha has brought a saving message of hope to the world by introducing a very optimistic philosophy that guarantees a freedom from all human weakness and suffering by means of a conscious human psychological techniques of growth and evolution of the human mind which brings results here and now.

Bhante Punnaji has many students in the United States, Canada and Europe who had benefitted from his teachings and who express their appreciation by speaking about the immense change in their lives for the better. Bhante is well known for his clear, accurate and original presentation of Buddhism and has grateful students the world over/in many parts of the world.

Bhante Punnaji is well-versed in Western fields of scientific knowledge including medicine and has a thorough understanding of comparative religions, philosophy and psychology. Bhante’s interpretations of the original teachings of the Buddha have been much enriched by these forays beyond a mere study and practice of Buddhism.

Bhante has played a significant role in the dissemination of Buddhism in the West and is well known to Buddhist in Canada, United States and abroad. Sought by many as a resourceful spiritual guide, Bhante Punnaji shares his time between the Buddhist centres in Canada, United States, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and other countries.

*Discover the original teachings of the Buddha
by Ven. Dr Bhante Mahathera Punnaji, please visit*

<http://www.protobuddhism.com>

THE 124 YEAR OLD BUDDHIST MAHA VIHARA, BRICKFIELDS

The Buddhist Maha Vihara was founded in 1894 by the Sasana Abhiwurdhi Wardhana Society (SAWS), the oldest registered Buddhist Society in the Klang Valley.

From its very inception, the Vihara has been managed by the Sinhala Buddhist community but always financially supported by the Chinese and Indian communities. The first structure of the Vihara was the Main Shrine room, completed in early 20th Century. The donors for the Shrine Room, as recorded in the Selangor Government Gazette 1896, pg. 408 are clearly Chinese and Indian communities and among the main donors were:

Kapitan Yeap Quang Seng, Towkay Loke Yew, K. Tambusamy Pillay, R. Doraisamy Pillay, Loke Chow Kit, San Peng and Son, Lim Tua Taw, etc...

The Vihara was always the focal point to mobilize the Buddhist community. The large gathering to protest and stop the screening of the then controversial film “Light of Asia” in 1927 in Malaysia was also held at the Vihara, and so was the mass gathering and signature campaign in the 1950s to lobby the government to declare Wesak as a national holiday.

During the Emergency period of 1948-1960, monks from the Vihara made a massive impact reaching out to calm and educate the psychologically disoriented Chinese New Villagers who were evicted from their traditional lands and placed in new settlements by the Government which was fighting a communist insurgency.

Since the 1940s, the Vihara commenced a free Dhamma publications program as a Dhammadutta outreach to the masses which by the year 2012 was made available in 28 languages, with millions of

copies of books and CDs produced. The Vihara's Buddhist Institute Sunday Dhamma School (BISDS), founded in 1929, is the oldest Sunday School in the country with an enrolment of more than 1200 students and continues to produce systematic books on Buddhist studies for children.

The Wesak procession organized by the Vihara since the 1890s is the oldest and largest religious procession in the country. The 3-day Wesak celebrations at the Vihara attracts about 100,000 people.

Many students or devotees who have studied and benefited from the BISDS, the Vihara's Free Publications, Dhamma programs, classes, talks, etc have gone on to set up new Buddhist societies and centers which help to spread Buddhism in the country far and wide.

The SAWS is also one of the founding members of the Malaysian Consultative Council for Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and Taoism (MCCBCHST) formed in 1983, a Council which constructively engages the Government on matters affecting non-Muslims in the country. The MCCBCHST Administrative office is based at the Vihara.

In 2004, the Vihara was a major focal point in the country to collect relief aid to assist the South Asian Tsunami that killed almost 280,000 people. Several 40 forty foot container equivalents of relief aid were dispatched out by the Vihara to Sri Lanka, Indonesia, India, Myanmar and Thailand by air, sea and land.

Buddhists remain the country's largest organ donors, thanks to Cornea and Organ Donation Campaign carried out by the Vihara.

The Vihara continues to operate to deliver its obligation to the Buddhist community till this day and is governed and directed by its Vision, 4 Missions, 6 Strategic Objectives and 4 Ennoblers in tribute and gratitude to all our past and current Sangha, volunteers,

donors, friends, etc. We would be failing in our duty if we fail to mention the name of the foremost amongst them, our late Venerable Chief, ie. Ven Dr Kirinde Sri Dhammananda.

Vision

To be a leading international center for the Learning, Practice and Dissemination of the Buddha Dhamma

Mission

To provide a conducive environment to:

- promote scholarship and study of the Buddha Dhamma
- propagate the Buddha Dhamma
- be the focus of Buddhist activities for the larger community
- foster Theravada Buddhist cultural and traditional practices

Six Strategic Objectives

To be the Buddhist center of choice for:

1. Learning, Practising and the Realization of the Dhamma
2. Spreading the Dhamma
3. Buddhist Civilization
4. Synergy groupings to sustain the Buddha Sasana
5. Compassion in Action
6. Financial Accountability while delivering Cultural Obligations

Four Ennoblers:

1. Loving Kindness
2. Compassion
3. Altruistic Joy
4. Equanimity

Motto

Go forth, for the good, happiness and welfare of the many, out of compassion for the world.

SERVICES AVAILABLE AT BUDDHIST MAHA VIHARA

- Dana for Monks (at Vihara or Home) and Bana (Sermons)
- Blessing Services / Funeral Services by Monks
- Booking of Facilities for religious functions / events
- Marriage Registration
- Full Moon / New Moon Day Puja & Free Vegetarian Lunch
- Sunday Dhamma Classes for Children & Adults
- Buddhist & Pali University Diploma, Degree & Masters Program
- K Sri Dhammananda Library
- Bookshop

DAILY ACTIVITIES

Monday to Sunday	6.30am - 7.30am 11.30pm - 12.00 noon 7.30pm - 8.30pm	Morning Buddha Puja Noon Buddha Puja Evening Buddha Puja
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WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

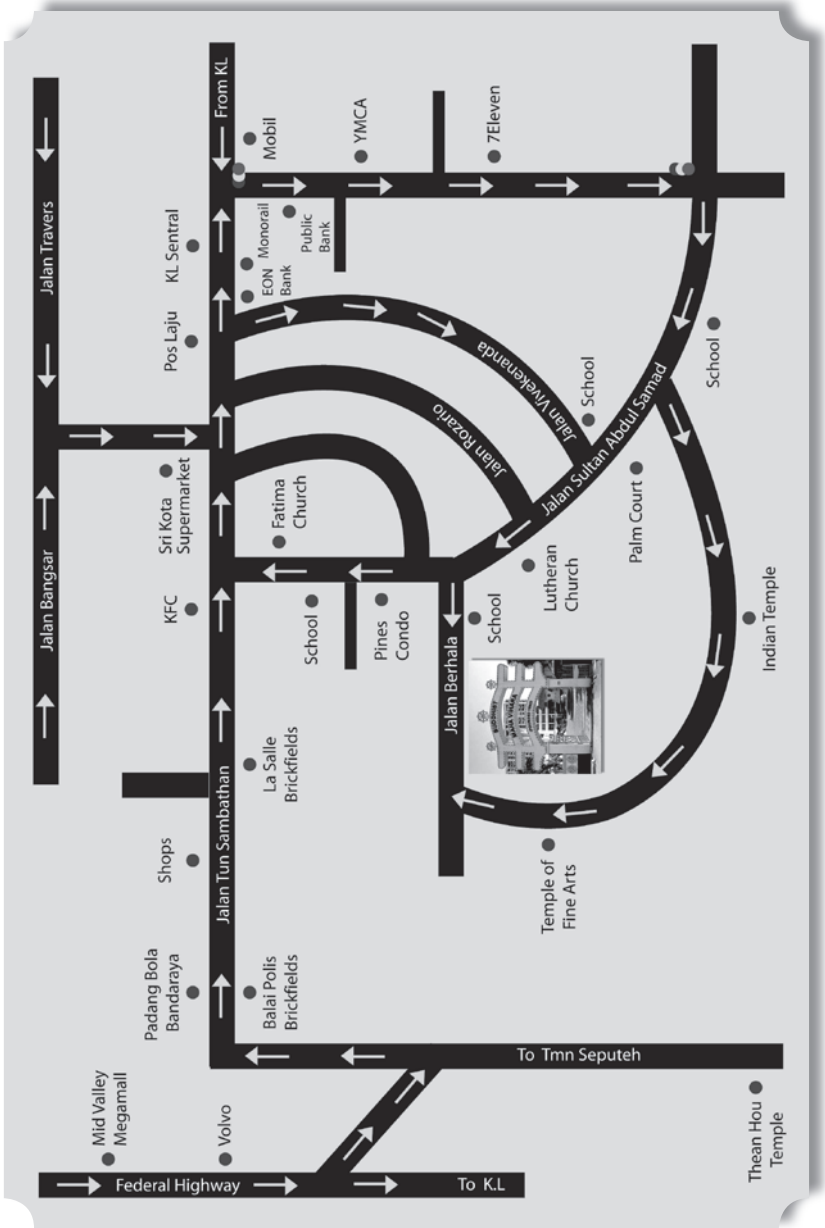
Mon, Wed, Thurs	8.00pm - 10.00pm	Meditation Class
Tuesday	8.30pm - 10.00pm	BMV Choir Practise
Thursday	7.30pm - 9.00pm	Senior Club Yoga Practise
Friday	1.00pm - 2.00pm	Afternoon Puja & Talk
	8.00pm - 9.30pm	Dhamma Talk
Saturday	7.30pm - 8.30pm	Bojjhanga Puja
	9.30am - 11.30am	Sanskrit Class
Sunday	8.30am - 9.30am	Morning Puja
	9.30am - 11.00am	Abhidhamma Class
	9.30am - 12.00 noon	Sunday School Session
	10.00am - 11.30am	Dhamma Talk
	10.00am - 2.00pm	Traditional Chinese Medicine <i>(1st and 3rd Sun of the month. Please note there will be no clinic if a Public Holiday falls on the allocated Sunday)</i>
	11.00am - 12.30pm	Pali and Sutta Class
	1.30pm - 5.00pm	Sinhala Language Classes Sinhala Cultural Dance Classes
2.00pm - 3.00pm	Dhamma for the Deaf <i>(fortnightly)</i>	
2.00pm - 7.00pm	Diploma & Degree in Buddhism Classes	
5.00pm	Feeding the Homeless	

DONATION IN CASH OR KIND CAN BE MADE FOR:

- BISDS Building Fund - Classrooms, Meditation Pavilion, Lifts, Meeting and Counseling rooms
- Free Publications (Malaysia and Overseas) - Annually about 300,000 books in 30 Languages
- Education Fund
- Full Moon and New Moon services sponsorship
- General Maintenance of the Buddhist Maha Vihara
- Utilities (Electricity, water, telephone, administration etc)
- Illumination (lighting) of the Main Shrine Hall
- Illumination (lighting) of the Awkana Buddha & Cakra
- Monks' Dana - Offering Monk Requisites of Food, Medicine, Lodging, Robes, etc
- Welfare Fund
- Special Religious Events - Wesak
 - Annual Blessing Service
 - Annual Merit Offering
 - Kathina Pinkama (ceremony)
 - Monks' Novitiate Programme

**MAY THE BLESSINGS OF THE NOBLE TRIPLE GEM
BE WITH YOU AND YOUR FAMILY**

LOCATION MAP TO BUDDHIST MAHA VIHARA



DONATION FORM

Buddhist Maha Vihara

123, Jalan Berhala, Brickfields,
50470 Kuala Lumpur, Wilayah Persekutuan, Malaysia.
Tel: 603-2274 1141 Fax: 603-2273 2570

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Amount : RM

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Bengali, Chichewa, Hindi, Kannada, Kishwahili,
Luganda, Oriya, Sinhala, Telegu, Brazilian, Dutch,
French, Japanese, Portugese, Spanish, Swedish,
Croatian, Marathi & German)

Others, please specify

.....

All cheques can be made payable to: BUDDHIST MAHA
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BRICKFIELDS, KL. Kindly send us a copy of your BANK SLIP
so that we can send you an OFFICIAL RECEIPT.

Donations can also be made by VISA and MasterCard at the
Buddhist Maha Vihara Office.



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For further information please contact info@bisds.org.



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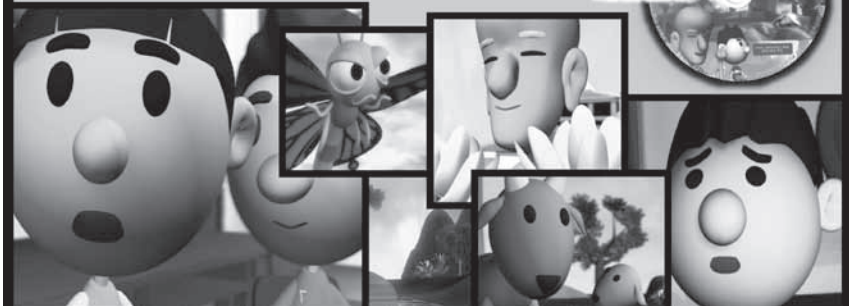
Ep1:
The Shrine
第一集:佛殿



Ep2:
Belief
第二集:相信



Ep3:
Butterfly's Gift
第三集:
蝴蝶的礼物



Produced by Buddhist Institute Sunday Dhamma School, Buddhist Maha Vihara
BISDS, Buddhist Maha Vihara, 123 Jalan Berhala, Brickfields, 50470 Kuala Lumpur.
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for
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向大寺院获取一本，给予你们的儿女，侄子，侄女，孙子学习佛法的机缘。



Sabba Dhanam Dhamma Dhanam Jinati
The Gift Of Truth Excels All Other Gifts
Dhammapada

一切施中法施最胜 - 法句经

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